

DRAMATICS

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An Educational Magazine for Directors, Teachers, and Students of Dramatic Arts

Vol. XXIV, No. 3

DECEMBER, 1952

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The "Adoration Scene" from *The Story of Christmas*, an original Christmas play, presented by Thespian Troupe 108, Kenmore, N. Y., Sr. High School, Eve Strong, Director and Sponsor.

DON'T BE TIMID!

By JAMES W. BROCK

ME, A TEACHER?

By JUNE MITCHELL

MUSIC AND DRAMA

By MARGARETTA HALLOCK

WE MADE A MOVIE

By FRANCES HYND

MY FINGERS ON YOUR PULSE

By KURTZ GORDON

Merry Christmas!

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CURTAIN GOING UP

By GREGORY JOHNSTON

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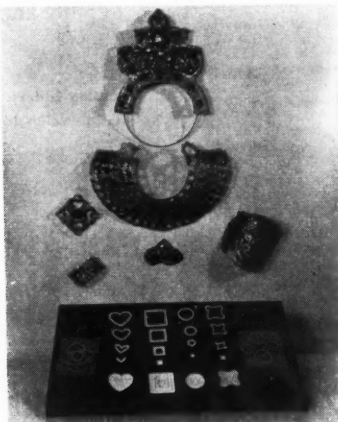


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NEW READINGS

In our 1953 catalog are listed many outstanding readings. We list here a few of the new ones:

HUMOROUS

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THE ESKIMO MAIDEN'S ROMANCE. Mark Twain. From "The Eskimo Maiden." 60c

GOING DOWN. Elizabeth Brant. 10 min. Monolog. A woman is in a department store "in the frenzy that reigns the day after Christmas, as people rush to exchange their gifts." She pushes her way into an over-crowded elevator and some comic incidents take place. 60c

SUPPRESSED DESIRES. Susan Glaspell. From the one-act comedy. 10 min. Henrietta's obsession with psychoanalysis leads to a weird interpretation of a dream, and nearly to a divorce before the absurdity is realized. Characters: A married couple and a woman friend. 75c

SUSIE'S LITTLE PLAY. Booth Tarkington. 10 min. Susie and Annabel decide to eavesdrop on their parents and each write a play that is to be presented at a neighborhood get-together. Susie's parents hear her and Minturn, (aged nine) rehearsing. They were taking the part of their parents during a quarrel. Characters: Booth Tarkington's inimitable children, two mothers and one father. 75c

WILEY AND THE HAIRY MAN. D. Vande Voort. 11 min. A humorous story of the deep south. (In dialect.) After three narrow escapes, young Wiley is saved from the Hairy Man. His mother, who "knew conjure," is the third character. 60c

DRAMATIC

BIMI. Rudyard Kipling. 9 min. Monolog in German dialect. A man tells of the murder of a young bride by a jealous orang-outang. ... 50c

INMATE OF THE DUNGEON. W. C. Morrow. A prisoner was unjustly condemned to a life sentence of hard work. After many years, another confesses and he is freed, but dies as he learns of his release. 60c

PAULINE PAVLOVNA. T. B. Aldrich. 10 min. The setting: Russia in the days of the Tsars. A Count loves Pauline Pavlovna, but because he has saved the life of the Tzar is given as reward the hand of Natasha, the court beauty. At a masked ball, he unloads his heart to one he thinks is Pauline. It is Natasha, who loves him, but gives him his heart's desire. Very dramatic and beautiful. 60c

QUO VADIS. Sienkiewicz. 10 min. The miraculous saving of a maiden from death in the arena is the cause of her lover's conversion to the Christian faith. Several good characters. 60c

SHADRACH, MESHACK AND ABEDNEGO. 8 min. This story from the Bible was used with great dramatic effect by Charles Laughton before the Knife and Fork Club in Sioux City, January, 1952. Seven hundred people sat enthralled as he impersonated the characters of this great drama. 60c

SOUL OF THE GREAT BELL. Lafcadio Hearn. 10 min. From the short story classic. This dramatic narrative will be in demand for story telling and interpretative reading. 50c

WEE WILLIE WINKIE. Kipling. 10 min. A little boy shows great heroism and saves his hero's lady and himself from being taken by bad men in India. 60c

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In This Issue

JAMES W. BROCK of the Speech Department, Albion College, Albion, Michigan, stresses standards of play selection in his excellent article, *Don't Be Timid!* in which he re-emphasizes the value of selecting the best plays. With thousands of high schools presenting plays each year he sincerely believes, and so do I, that selecting the right play is the hardest job for any director or student committee. The success or failure of an entire dramatic arts program rests on these decisions. Mr. Brock's suggestions are worth your consideration.

WOULD YOU like to make a movie? Or is television now your only forte? McMurry College did just that — a full-length movie of *Medea*. Frances Hynds, News Director of McMurry College, Abilene, Texas, tells how it was done in her delightful article, *We Made a Movie*.

I OFTEN WONDERED what a successful playwright thought of the high school theatre. I am not talking about the "arty," professional author who looks down his nose at any play not presented on Broadway, but that author who writes plays for all amateur theatres. I found the answer in *My Fingers on Your Pulse* by Kurtz Gordon, who has authored a number of successful plays for the amateur theatre. You may be surprised to find how well he thinks of you.

JUNE MITCHELL continues her series by opening wide the door for you who are interested in teaching careers in the dramatic arts field. She tells you some things that you, as high school students, can hardly believe: Teaching is an interesting, broadening and in most communities, a well-paying job — and it's fun too! Don't miss reading her article, *Me, a Teacher?* It will open wide your eyes.

FOND MEMORIES were re-awakened as I read Margaretta Hallock's article, *Music and Drama*, in the third of our series of *Working Together*. In a number of the productions which she mentioned I had the pleasure of working with her. I endorse every word she says about the importance of music in the theatre. Are you working with your music department? If not, you have never taken full advantage of all the possibilities of Theatre. Miss Hallock, by the way, is Sponsor of Thespian Troupe 520, William Penn Senior High School, York, Pennsylvania.

WILBUR WILLEY, Sponsor of Troupe 1127, Tilton-Northfield High School, Tilton, New Hampshire, authored our play of the month. Have you ever done *Old Doc*? I am sure after you have read *Staging Old Doc* you will consider it for possible production in the near future.

SI MILLS takes us into the radio studio of *The Railroad Hour* and behind the television lights for a visit in *The Pet Shop*. Paul Myers walks with us through the theatre district just off Broadway. Louise Horton takes us to Baltimore, Maryland to meet Isabel Burger, a specialist in the field of creative dramatics, and several of her teen-age students. We visit a movie cartoon studio with Kenn Carmichael. Talbot Pearson again briefs the latest plays and books on Theatre. And after a lapse of one month in order to publish our Best Thespians, our student Thespian authors are with us again with their *Thespian Chatter*.

OUR EDITORIAL STAFF wishes you a very Merry Christmas.



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As I See It . . .

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Are you sponsors planning to attend the joint national convention of the Speech Association of America and the American Educational Theatre Association which will be held in Cincinnati on December 29, 30, 31? The National Council of your society extends to you a special invitation—an invitation to dinner as its guests on Tuesday evening, December 30. We hope to have for you a real surprise—an inspection of our new office building located on College Hill. Weather permitting, we are moving into it in December. We are planning a real housewarming—or should I have said officewarming? Will you be with us to help with its dedication?

TROUPE 552 ACCEPTS

The sectional meeting, **The High School Theatre**, jointly sponsored by AETA and your society at the convention, will feature a performance of **La Comedienne**, an old French morality play, by Thespian Troupe 552, Elder High School, Cincinnati. It will be under the direction of Father Putnick. Accepting this responsibility offers a real challenge—and a

To Helen Hayes, retiring President of ANTA, who served so well during her two year term of office.

To William Halstead, President of AETA, University of Michigan Drama Department, newly-elected member of the Board of Directors of ANTA.

MORE OF THE CONVENTION PROGRAM

Features of the convention which will particularly appeal to high school teachers of speech and drama are as follows: Christopher Fry's **The Lady's Not for Burning**, University of Cincinnati Mummers Guild; Radio, Television, Motion Pictures; Declamations or Readings; Contests or Festivals; Extracurricular Speech Activities; Puppets; Acting; Training for Children's Theatre; Simplified Lighting; Directing; Current Trends in Scene Design. It's worth the price of admission.

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH

"Television offers promise of being one of the most effective methods for education ever devised. Educational institutions must now meet, in concrete terms, the challenge of using it so wisely as fully to justify the allocation



One Foot in Heaven, Conemaugh Twp. High School, Davidsville, Pa., Troupe 412, Hilda Kring, Director, presented for the benefit of the Heart Association.

distinct honor—both for the troupe and its sponsor. Thespian Sponsor Marion Stuart, Troupe 106, Champaign, Illinois, is Chairman of this meeting.

ORCHIDS OF THE MONTH

To Thespian Troupe 412, Conemaugh Twp. High School, Davidsville, Pennsylvania, Hilda A. Kring, Sponsor, for its presentation of **One Foot in Heaven**, in which all proceeds were presented to the Heart Association. By such magnanimity one can plant his Troupe in the heart of his community from which it can never be uprooted.

To Clarence Derwent, the principal speaker at our Eastern Regional Conference last April, the newly-elected President of the American National Theatre and Academy.

of educational channels. These channels must be used immediately, guarded and guided on every level for the cultural and educational benefits of the entire nation. To allow them to lie fallow would mean that they would inevitably be lost."—Arthur S. Adams, President of the American Council on Education

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THE ROMAN KID

Paul Gallico's enchanting Saturday Evening Post story is offered here as an unusual and challenging new one-act play. Staged with a simple curtain backdrop, the fascinating plot combines a young American sports writer, modern Rome, and the daughter of a famous archeologist. In an electrifying scene the young sports writer, talking in terms of modern sport, brings the Roman Colosseum to life, and by doing so, provides an exciting conclusion to this fresh and original plot. The cast is 4 men and 2 women.

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OPENING NIGHT

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The Man Who Came to Dinner, presented by Troupe 718, Central High School, Fountain City, Tenn., Alberta Ahler, Sponsor.

Don't BE TIMID!

By JAMES W. BROCK

THE enormous significance of the high school theatre cannot be over-emphasized. There is actually more theatre activity on this level than the average layman suspects. In the majority of communities throughout the United States the high school play is the sole representative of theatre art. Professional theatre activity is largely restricted to Broadway and a few major cities that entertain touring companies. Community and college theatres help to supplement this meager trickle of "road shows" that penetrate into the great hinterland of America, but they are few compared to the number of high schools producing plays.

Since high school theatre is so important as a cultural and educational force in the average community, we need to examine what kind of job the high school theatre is doing. This question should be asked: What kind of plays are produced?

Many worthwhile standards of play selection have been set up in the past. Those formulated by the Secondary School Committee of the *American Educational Theatre Association* in 1938 with the help of *The National Thespian Society*, with Ernest Bavely as chairman

of the special committee on play standards, are summarized here as follows:

1. a worthwhile theme
2. literary value
3. within the capacities of the high school student to understand and appreciate
4. challenge the highest creative and artistic abilities
5. "good theatre" affording opportunities for sincere acting and satisfying entertainment
6. free from objectionable subject matter

But how well are these standards being met in practice? The answer is painfully negative in most cases. The excellent article by Ronald C. Gee and John E. Dietrich, *A Survey of Dramatic Activity in Wisconsin High Schools: 1947-1948** presents some shocking conclusions. According to this article more than three-fourths of the plays have little perceivable dramatic or literary merits.

There are many reasons why the standards of play selections are so low. I will cite only a few. Too often high school plays are produced by inexperienced teachers who are "drafted" for the job. The tradition of class plays forces the unfortunate director to use people regardless of their talents. Lack

of time and primitive working conditions cause many a harassed director to pick out a play that seems easy to do. The violent prejudice most high school administrators have against spending money forces the teacher-director to abandon all hope of selecting a royalty play.

In spite of the tremendous obstacles imposed upon the teacher-director I wish to offer a few suggestions for choosing plays:

1. Have a long-range program that offers variety.

Student actors as well as their audience should be given the opportunity of experiencing many types of plays. It is inconsistent for the student to study the finest plays in literature classes, and then be exposed to trash in his extra-curricular experience. The situation is analogous to the English student who studies the finest literature in class and then is told to read the comics for outside reading. Students in music study the best in musical literature and usually play this same literature in actual concerts. Not so in the case of the high school drama student who spends long hours to master his lines in a play that is often not worth the paper it is printed

* QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF SPEECH (Feb., 1950)
PP. 65-70.

(Continued on page 31)



The Nativity, an annual presentation of Brush, Col., High School, Troupe 968, Margaret Wood, Sponsor.



Director Bill Adams tells Jason, Maurice Pullig of Sweetwater, the difference in acting on a live stage from that before a movie camera, while technicians in the foreground get set to start them "rolling."

WE MADE A MOVIE

By FRANCES HYND

TOSS pessimism to the four winds, latch on tightly to patience and you too can be in the film profession, for with this recipe, we made a movie at McMurry.

After twelve grueling weeks of actual filming, plus several months' background preparation, the movie, *Medea*, directed by W. J. (Bill) Adams, head of the McMurry College Speech Department, was ready for its World Premiere.

Euripides' classic, which the McMurrans selected as their project, was made in full color and sound. From all available information it is the first Greek Tragedy to be filmed by any group in the United States, Hollywood included.

It took more than an average amount of determination to retain patience and overlook pessimism in filming *Medea*, for McMurry is a relatively small Methodist institution with limited facilities

and funds. College officials said it would be impossible to make a movie at McMurry when the idea was first mentioned.

The McMurry Film Society, by sponsoring a weekly movie, raised \$500 to be used toward buying necessary filming equipment. When administrators realized that if McMurry undertook the project, it would be one of the very first colleges or universities in the nation offering credit courses in movie-making, they gave the green light. It was also pointed out the equipment would eventually be more than worth its cost as it could continue to be used for filming educational movies for television, plus other films like *Medea* which could be distributed commercially.

Mr. Adams and his staff then immediately began to make plans around *Medea*. A foolish choice, so a few laymen said before Adams explained the selection as follows:

- (1) By general consensus Greek Tragedy is among the greatest of all dramatic literature.
- (2) Euripides is considered one of the world's four greatest playwrights.
- (3) McMurry, having already given the stage production, was fairly positive that the same cast and technical crew could make the movie.
- (4) From all available information a Greek Tragedy had never before been filmed by a professional or amateur group.
- (5) Just as educational systems have found the theater worthy of its efforts, production, and scholarly research, so cinema has matured sufficiently to warrant investigation.

(Continued on page 30)



Creon, Jerry Powell of Andrews, gets last-minute finishing touches from Director Bill Adams before he leaves the dressing room.



Good Housekeeping, Sturgeon Bay, Wisc., High School, Troupe 877, Lea Wildhagen, Sponsor.

HOW often, when you have the printed text of a play in your hand at rehearsal or while studying a part, do you look twice at the front-page cover to dwell even the most remotely upon the playwright's name? There are probably only a minority of you who will look twice or think once about his name. But this is not so in the case of playwrights, who write specifically for YOU. We spend days and sometimes weeks thinking about you. You are a very important part of our life. We literally watch over your bedside, so to speak.

Why? Because we have learned to regard the great and ever-growing ranks of our high school actors, the backstage carpenters, the scenic artists, the costume designers, the electricians, the publicity men, in fact your entire staff, with high esteem and constant concern. My fingers and those of my fellow-craftsmen figuratively reach for your pulse from time to time, since this is our only way of knowing about your ever-growing, healthy advancement. Then we try to fill your prescription for a play that your current appetite craves for; and writing exactly that right play for your specific requirements and limitations are as equally important to us as the selection of the proper play you choose for your particular stage, your actors and your staff.

The young actors who tread the boards and play upon the thousands of stages in as many auditoriums throughout this great nation are no longer merely considered the fringe of the theatre. You are building a great future while Broadway, I regret to state, is shrinking in the waistline. It is no longer a Great White Way, but a puny belt trying to hold its prestige together.

There are many colleges and even high schools that have modern auditoriums with stages and equipment that would put most of our backward Broadway theatres to shame. Their sensitive switchboards and battalion of lights, so timely controlled that they

operate at the master electrician's touch of a button, and the curtain, which will fly or part by his turn of a knob, are model stages vastly in the minority. Never — and I mean NEVER — underestimate, however, your importance on stage or your technical job off-stage while a performance is going on; for at that very moment you are contributing to the history of the theatre in America. To the countless number of Thespians in the high schools, not so well equipped, I would like to point out that for a completely successful production of a play, one must be ever mindful of these few top-important points.

As Shakespeare said, "The play's the thing!" and how right he is. Without it your stage would be useless, your auditorium unnecessary and your actors a thing of the past; and since the play is the hub upon which all the spokes of production are attached, is it not then all important to choose the right play for you? Student committees who read

(Continued on page 29)

By **KURTZ GORDON**

My Fingers on Your Pulse



Little Women, Santa Barbara, Calif., High School, Troupe 1202, Ethel Roberg, Director.

ME, a TEACHER?

By JUNE MITCHELL

HOW do you plan to use your high school dramatics? Theatre is your first love, and yet you are faced with the necessity of obtaining a job with security and a regular salary. If such is the case, you should definitely consider teaching as a phase of theatre which is both rewarding and available. Openings in the professional theatre are few and far between. Community theatre seldom provides a full-time paying job. Directing the dramatics program in a high school or college can be as satisfying in its own way as the professional theatre, and a trained dramatics teacher is reasonably sure of a good job.

If you wish to become a specialist and obtain a position as a full-time dramatics teacher, then you have probably already decided against teaching in the grades. Few if any such positions exist on the grade-school level. Your choice then is between high school teaching and college or university teaching. Let's discuss high school teaching first.

You are already familiar with the techniques of one high school dramatics program — that of your own school. How do you like it? Does it make you want to try out your own ideas — produce your own high school plays?

Introducing high school students to the theatre can be a thrilling experience. Teen-agers are of a satisfactory age — old enough to have intelligence and maturity; young enough to accept direction with enthusiasm. The high school dramatics program is stimulating and can be as ambitious as you want it to be. Your personal situation is pleasant. As director of dramatics you are usually well-liked by the students. As a specialist you probably receive a higher salary than a regular teacher. As a public school teacher you have tenure and retirement benefits. If you want to take a fling at the local community theatre, you are welcomed with open arms. Granted that a full-time dramatics program means you work like a dog, the rewards are more tangible than those of most teachers. Not only do you have the private satisfaction of watching your students blossom out personally, but your performances are seen and evaluated not only by the school, but by the public.

Teaching dramatics in the high school then is a desirable position. Are such

full-time positions available? Yes, but as for any specialist's job you may have to look a little farther and wait a little longer before you find one in which your curricular teaching is all speech and drama.

Fortunately for you, such jobs are presently experiencing a slight but definite increase. The Speech Arts, which include drama, are on their way up in educational circles. Organizations such as the American Educational Theatre Association and the American National Theatre and Academy are sparking a drive to convince school educators that

Don't be fooled by a theatre school which does not offer a recognized college degree. You cannot get a teaching position in a public high school today without a bachelor's degree. Indeed, if you wish to rise in your profession, you will want to study further and earn a master's degree. The college you choose then must provide the education courses you need; it must train its students to be teachers. The important thing is that you come out of college, not an actor, but a teacher of acting; not a director of professional plays, but a director of young people in plays of professional standing.

On the other side of the picture, be sure that the college you choose has a high rating in the world of the theatre. You can choose a college which specializes in speech and drama such as Emerson College in Boston, Massachusetts; The School of Drama at the Art Institute of Chicago; or the Pasadena Playhouse in California. Or you can select one of the big universities which have strong drama departments, and enroll in their school of speech and drama.



His Star, St. Teresa Academy, Troupe 118, East St. Louis, Ill., Sister Mary Pius, Director.

high school speech and drama are worthwhile activities in themselves, and that they deserve a full-time, well trained teacher. By the time you are ready to accept a teaching position, you ought to be able to find the kind of position you want available, provided your preparation is adequate.

What type of college will give you this preparation? Obviously, it must have a good theatre school, a good drama department, but even more strongly, it must provide a liberal arts background, a training in educational methods.

All the requirements which are true as preparation for general high school teaching are equally true as preparation for teaching high school dramatics.

Among the many outstanding are: Northwestern University, Chicago, Illinois; Carnegie Institute of Technology, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; University of Denver, Denver, Colorado; University of California at Los Angeles and the University of Washington, Seattle. All the colleges and Universities advertising in DRAMATICS are also highly recommended.

Write for a catalogue from any college or university which interests you. Read carefully the description of the courses listed under Drama or Theatre. Consult your high school guidance director about the standing of the college. There are many institutions where the excellent quality of combined theatre

(Continued on page 28)

Music and Drama

By MARGARETTA HALLOCK

TO DRAMA music is a handmaiden whose charms enhance and bring out in bold relief the beauty and character of its mistress. Whatever the type of dramatic production, music has a role ranging from that of lead to bit part. It would be foolish of any director in any phase of dramatics to refuse it a part.

Radio, movies, television, as well as the stage, know the psychological effect of music upon an audience. Well chosen selections, often especially composed for the occasion, are used as background which subconsciously affects the emotions of the audience. Here is a medium which along with lighting is a most important addition to modern drama. However, to call it an addition is perhaps a misnomer, for its value was well known in the days of the "melter-dramers" and later in the infancy of the silent films. Then the pianist was a regular employee of the theatre. Seated near the stage he announced the approach of the hero by the saccharine strains of "Hearts and Flowers" school of music or kept pace on the ivories with the train as it thundered onward toward Pauline in her Perils. Then the musician and the tinny piano were as much a part of the shows as the gifted musician and subtly-used mood music of the modern films. Its importance to Hollywood or Radio City is attested by the high salaried composers who create or select music to suit each production.

What is of value to the professional director is also an important assistant to the high school dramatic coach. In every phase of the dramatic arts he too can well use music. In pageantry especially he needs its help. This type of production is a blend of drama, music, dance and lighting, moving along

(Continued on page 27)

TOP HONORS OF THE DAY

Pasadena Playhouse One-Act Tournament
March 24 and 25, 1952



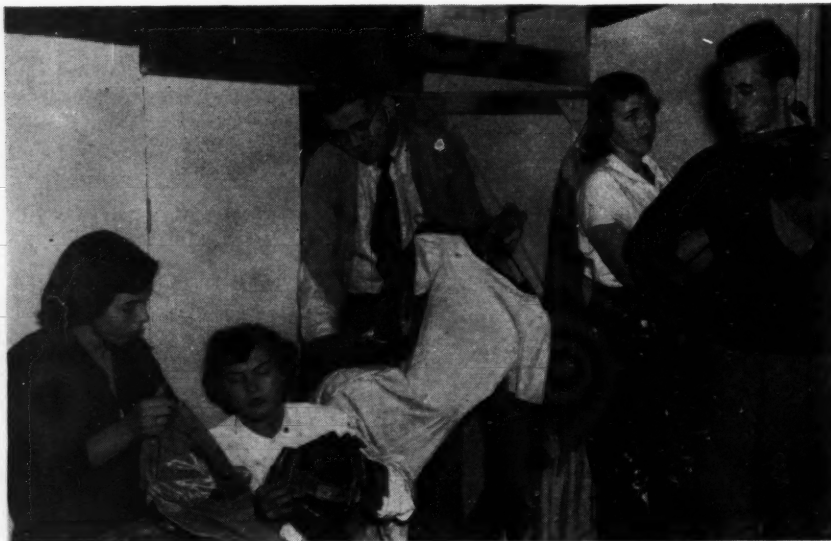
Monrovia-Duarte High School, Monrovia, Calif., Troupe 392, received the Superior Merit Award for its production of **The Informer** under the direction of Margaret Barton Wood, Sponsor. The school, as well as the other two schools pictured below, received a Fresnelite and a two-year scholarship to Pasadena Playhouse for a student chosen most deserving by the director.



For its excellent presentation of Dryer's **John Doe**, Troupe 435, San Pedro, Calif., High School, was also awarded the Superior Merit Award. Robert L. Rivera is the Sponsor.



Fullerton, Calif., Union High School, Troupe 1230, was the third school to receive top honors for its production of **The Maker of Laws** under the direction of George D. Archambeault, Sponsor.



The boys help too when a play must be costumed at the Children's Experimental Theatre, Baltimore, Md., Isabel Burger, Director.

CHILDREN'S THEATRE

We Can't Give It Up!

By LOUISE C. HORTON

WHAT does Children's Theatre have to offer to Thespians? There are two obvious answers:

- 1) Participation in Children's Theatre prepares elementary school youngsters for high school dramatics.
- 2) After arriving in high school, teen-agers who act in Children's Theatre productions obtain superb experience.

You have heard both reasons before, I am sure. But there is still another phase of Children's Theatre of even greater importance, Creative Dramatics. To the high school director no other area of theatre offers more encouragement to young actors.

Individual creation of a role, used in our modern theatre and in our films, is ignored persistently and surprisingly by both the high school actor and director. Yet it is used in the best children's theatres and in the leading college and university theatres. Why is this method so conspicuously absent in the preparation of high school productions?

The high school director is missing a chance to spark his productions when he ignores it. The high school actor is missing a chance to improve his characterization when he fails to try it. If John Ford, the Hollywood director, uses it—and he reportedly does—it should be reason enough for student and director.

The importance of Creative Dramatics to teen-agers is best illustrated by the following incident which occurred to Mrs. Isabel Burger of Baltimore, Maryland, who is nationally known in this specialized field.

In 1943 a group of teen-agers approached Mrs. Burger to protest their having to drop the course because they had now passed the age limit.

"But Creative Dramatics is not open to anyone over 14 years of age," Mrs. Burger protested; "you have outgrown it."

"But we can't give it up," they repeated. "It is in our weekly classes with you that we get the most help in facing

our daily problems . . . in getting rid of our mixed-up ideas."

These teen-agers then requested their own Creative Dramatics classes. So persistent were they that Mrs. Burger had to consent. The classes for teen-agers have been thriving ever since. This season, ten years later, there are two such groups meeting on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings of each week.

These are all young people who have had creative dramatics since they were very young, who realized its value and who insisted on its continuance. Here are several reasons, given in their own words, just what this form of dramatics means to them both in theatre work and in life and living:

"We're trying at this age to get to understand people and what makes them tick. Our improvisations about life situations give us a chance to do that. We'll be losing that if the opportunity is taken away from us."

"We're what the grown-ups call awkward adolescents, but here at Children's Experimental Theatre, we feel relaxed and free, like a family. People our age need this kind of experience much more than the younger kids do. We just can't give it up!"

"It has become a living, breathing, thinking part of me. Perhaps there have been a few rough spots on the surface, but it's the inside that counts—the deep-down feeling of honestly knowing that you have achieved something."

"I have been with you for over eight years . . . rehearsing for 'my role as a grown-up.' In September I will be going to college. I feel as if I am going away from much more than my home."

Let us now take a look at these classes to find out about what all these young people are so enthusiastic.



It Might Be St. Nick, Troupe 149, Paragould, Ark., High School, Mrs. W. J. Stone, Director.

For
INTERNATIONAL THEATRE MONTH
TWO NEW PLAYS

SIMPLE SIMON by Aurand Harris

A young, innocent stranger comes to visit a totalitarian country, where no one thinks without the Queen's permission. He soon falls afoul of some of the Queen's arbitrary rules, and is thrown into prison, escapes execution by apologizing to the Queen, but pricked by his conscience, he whispers the truth into the ground. Miraculously, a tree grows from his whisper, and as it grows its branches sing the truth aloud to the sky — "The Queen is a Tyrant!" Once again, he is sentenced to execution, when by exercising his natural talents, he is able to save the Princess' life, and the Queen learns that the personal freedom of her subjects is precious to the kingdom.

HIAWATHA, Peace Maker of the Iroquois by James Norris

The five tribes of the Iroquois are at war with one another, when young Hiawatha goes with his friends on a hunting trip. Captured by Chief Atotarho of the Onandagas, who longs to bring all the Iroquois under his submission, Hiawatha escapes with the aid of an old sage, who sends him on his dream fast, where he conceives a plan for bringing all the Iroquois Chiefs together into a league for peace. Summoning the five Chiefs together, he persuades all to agree to peace between them. But when Atotarho demands the right to be Head Chieftain, and then commands the tribes to arm for war against the World, the other Chiefs, by general agreement, veto his plan, and the Great Spirit sends Hiawatha to carry his message to other tribes.

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Each class, an hour and a half long, is devoted to pantomime mood exercises planned carefully with an eye to the loosening of tight bodies. There are Mood Sequences for which original background music stimulates spontaneous body responses. Occasional rhythm exercises to tone up muscles vary the program. The greater part of the time is devoted to dialogue improvisations based on familiar life situations dealing with the conflicts that are intrinsic parts of these young peoples' own life experiences. On occasion characters or scenes from great plays are used as improvisation material, but more often the content deals with matters which are of deep concern to the boys and girls who are seeking a way of life, a working

philosophy amid a troubled and insecure world.

Mrs. Burger's method provides adequate time for free, spontaneous group discussion and analysis of each situation and of each participant's work. After many years experimenting with this age group, Mrs. Burger has concluded that this exchange of ideas, this creative interaction is the most satisfying to the boys and girls.

"They have a chance to air their views," says this director, "to feel that

they are individuals whose opinions matter, who can be heard without being thought silly, irrational adolescents."

To sum it all up, let us quote Mrs. Burger herself: "Helping to build people is the most thrilling job in the world, but to those who must stress the play itself and the actors, I say that the capable high school actor is also the well-rounded, imaginative balanced personality. It follows then that since the creative drama experience builds better people, it also builds better actors."



My Friend Irma, Troupe 8, Edison Sr. High School, Miami, Fla., Bryce Dunham, Sponsor.



This Strange Night, Troupe 1199, Vancouver, Wash., High School, Dorothy Salter, Director.

DIALING AROUND

By SI MILLS

THE RAILROAD HOUR, in order to tailor productions to the short period allotted it (one-half hour), cuts the stories of the musical comedies it presents until they are little more than the skeletons of the originals. However, the story lines of the originals were much less important than the music and only acted as cohesives for the singing. It is only fair then that any appraisal of these old musicals should be made on the singing, and not on the acting. That is where *The Railroad Hour* shines—in its music.

The music is highly pleasing to the ear. An easiness of manner that indicates that the performers are not straining is the key to its success. It is generally true in the theatre that an actor who is at ease can aid his audience in relaxing with him—without going to sleep. And this same ease of performance can be true on radio. Not only "can be," but is. This ease is the hallmark of successful performers and it is borne with distinction by this program.

The Railroad Hour, which is sponsored by the Association of American Railroads, was first heard on the air October 4, 1948, on another network. The program moved to NBC on October 3, 1949, but did not miss a broadcast in the change. Gordon MacRae, popular baritone and radio and screen star, who is the host for this program,



Gordon MacRae, Dorothy Warenskjold and music director, Carmen Dragon (center), study the score for an original play with music to be presented on *The Railroad Hour*.

has been heard on every broadcast. His leading ladies, including many or most of the top singers in the opera and light opera field, were Lucille Norman, Dorothy Kirsten, Annamary Dickey, Virginia Haskins, Nadine Conner, Nell Tangelman, Blanche Thebom, Patrice Munsel, Patricia Morrison, Evelyn Case, Mimi Benzell and Dorothy Warenskjold (pronounced WAH-ren-shawld). The program has presented adaptations of light opera, musical comedies and dramas, as well as original plays with music.

Gordon MacRae's life story has a Horatio Alger touch—the story of a page who rose to stardom in radio and motion pictures. MacRae's brief try in business during a vacation so convinced his father that music and dramatics were more likely to be Gordon's career that he took the young man on a grand tour of Europe the summer before he was to enter Amherst.

Shortly after their return, Gordon's father died, and MacRae decided to quit school and go to work. He won a

contest for male singers and appeared briefly in a Billy Rose show at the World's Fair. Then, wanting to act, he joined the Millpond Playhouse at Roslyn, Long Island. He was paid \$5 a week plus room and board. There he met actress Sheilah Stephans, who later became his wife.

MacRae left the Playhouse to become a page at NBC in New York. This job was the start of a career for others too, including Ted Steele and Earl Wrightson. The young baritone had a habit of singing to himself, especially if he thought someone might hear him. It worked out just that way. Horace Heidt heard him and offered him a job as vocalist with his orchestra in 1941.

MacRae got a part in the Broadway play, *Junior Miss*, and at the same time sang in Ray Bloch's radio chorus. When Frank Sinatra gave up a sustaining radio program, MacRae went after the job and got it. He sang on the program from February to June, 1943, when he was called into army service. He advanced from private to lieutenant by the time he was discharged.

Then he went back to radio in several sustaining programs and finally won a commercial show as star of the NBC *Teentimers* program. He began to build a following among the young set. In 1946 he also was featured on Broadway in the musical, *Three to Make Ready*.

From then on he moved up fast. A recording contract was followed by a contract with Warner Brothers. His films, *The Big Punch* and *Look for the Silver Lining*, showed his radio fans that MacRae is handsome as well as a talented singer.

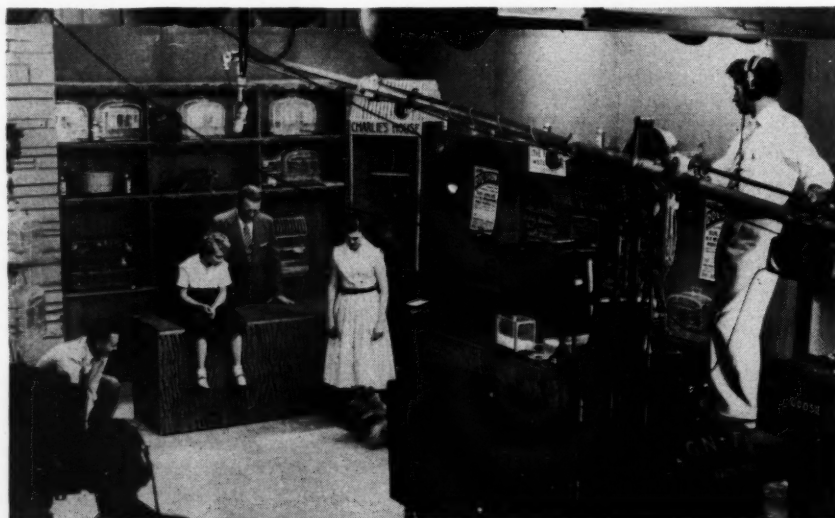
The popularity of *The Railroad Hour* is attested not only by scientific sampling methods but by the reception accorded the show by newspaper radio editors and the quantity and quality of fan mail. It is widely described as a refreshing departure from the usual format of radio programs. *The Railroad Hour* gives listeners the opportunity to hear great musical shows, which they may never be able to attend, and to hear leading stars of stage, screen, radio, concert and opera.

Juvenile Programs

Someone has asked me why I give consideration to juvenile programs on radio and television—more often the latter—when I am aware of the fact that *DRAMATICS* is aimed at boys and girls in senior high school and college. My answer is double-barreled.

First, there is a large juvenile audience to be taken into consideration. To them television has been a boon. The motion pictures, which may have been their manna from heaven—or Hollywood—have been limited for several reasons. For one thing, it costs money to attend a movie. For another, the length of time required is a period of several

(Continued on page 26)



Gail Compton, Gay Compton and Pet Shop Guests.

THEATRE on BROADWAY

By PAUL MYERS

IT HAS been many years since a theatre season seemed as reluctant to get under way as the one now being reviewed. By the time this reaches your eyes activity will be in full swing, but at the time of this writing the Broadway theatre finds itself just on the threshold. The pattern set by recent seasons called for several openings during the first week of September and two or three during successive weeks. This season the openings have been dribbling in. Next week, which will bring in five new offerings, is the first one evincing what we have come to think of as normal autumnal theatre. Before we announce the oncoming events, however, let us examine those attractions which have bowed.

Just after we came together last month, Hugh Hastings' nautical comedy, *Seagulls Over Sorrento*, had its premiere at the John Golden Theatre. The work is still enjoying a most successful run in

with Philip Langner, staged the work following the pattern of the London production. J. Pat O'Malley, John Randolph and Leslie Nielsen filled the leading roles most adequately. The smooth playing Guy Spaul was very pleasant as the commanding officer. *Seagulls Over Sorrento*, however, was not strong enough to survive transplanting.

Almost a week after the opening of the British naval play another visitor from the West End took up residence on West 45th Street. Stanley Young's *Mr. Pickwick* is being presented in New York by the Playwrights' Company — the producing organization made up by the partnership of three of our most illustrious playwrights and two of the theatre's leading producers. When Maxwell Anderson, Elmer Rice and Robert E. Sherwood (the writing members) and Roger L. Stevens and John F. Wharton present a play written by one



Noel Leslie, Frances Starr and John D. Seymour in a scene from Anthony Parella's production of Somerset Maugham's *The Sacred Flame*.

London, where it has been hailed as the British counterpart to Thomas Heggen's and Joshua Logan's *Mr. Roberts*. The short life of the work on 45th Street only served to emphasize once again the difficulty of transplanting a play from St. Martin's Lane to Shubert Alley.

The action of *Seagulls Over Sorrento* takes place at an experimental base for the British Navy not far from the coast of Scotland. As did *Mr. Roberts*, the recent British importation has an all-male cast. It never, however, evinces the same virility and gusto of our distinguished play of naval life. Those who saw the Heggen-Logan play, or read the work from which it was adapted, will remember the strength of the characters and the dialogue they spoke. The situation too was one that held an audience with more power. A crew of men under the stress of war duty seems more compelling than a peacetime experimental unit.

The production did as much for the script as the latter allowed. The author and Charles Bowden, the co-producer

outside of the firm, one expects something most brilliant. *Mr. Pickwick*, truth to tell, fell rather short of this expectation.

Our theatre's recent awareness of Charles Dickens is very satisfying. The films have worked with him with considerable success, but he has been a stranger to the boards. Mr. Dickens had a feeling for the stage and must be pleased with the trend if such facts are discernible to him. Last season, Emlyn Williams presented a program of Dickens' readings. His selections included *The Pickwick Papers*, from which Mr. Young's play has been (the program states) "freely drawn."

I always approach such an evening in the theatre with mixed ideas. To this time I have not satisfactorily decided which of two courses of action I should pursue. Should I read the work from which a play has been adapted — or reread it if it is something I have not perused for a long while — in order to be better informed? By so doing one would come to the performance equipped with a clear idea of the origi-

nal author's text and would be in a position to know to what extent the adapter has caught the feeling of the original work. At times this seems far and away the more advisable course of action. On the other hand, there are times when I think it unfair to approach the play thus equipped. I tell myself that, in order to best judge the merit of the play, I should go with an open mind and then determine how strong an impression the play has made upon me. Did the adapter catch the salient features of the plot and the chief points of the author's thought?

As has been said, I have not fully resolved this problem. My course of action in such cases therefore is to do the one on some occasions and the latter upon others. (I would be very happy, incidentally, to learn the feelings of Thespians on this subject if any feel disposed to write to me.) I had not read *The Pickwick Papers* since I had done so for a high school book report. It was only rather sketchily recalled when I went to see Mr. Young's dramatization of it.

The chief fault of the play is its slowness. This is only partially due to the script. John Burrell has staged it in the expansive and leisurely pace of the novel. In two acts and six scenes, Stanley Young has told of the travels of Mr. Pickwick and his friends in the search for knowledge. Except for the scene at Mrs. Leo Hunter's garden party, all of the sections of the play seem too much of a piece. In that scene, however, *Mr. Pickwick* does come alive and the play gets its walking shoes off the ground. Not a little of the success of the scene comes from the playing of Estelle Winwood, whose artificiality is just the right note for the character — and the play — to strike. Due largely to the presence of this gifted actress, that scene seemed the brightest.

Here again, the production left nothing to be desired. The costumes of Kathleen Ankers are brilliant. They are the embodiment of everyone's fondest recollections of the illustrations in the text — but with more color. The five settings have not been executed with as much sumptuousness as the clothes, but they are detailed enough to serve the production in good stead. George Howe is most enjoyable in the title role and

(Continued on page 25)

FATHER OF THE BRIDE

SORRY, WRONG NUMBER and THE HITCH-HIKER

THE CURIOUS SAVAGE

JENNY KISSED ME

LAURA (HIGH SCHOOL VERSION)

GRAMERCY GHOST

MR. BARRY'S ETCHINGS

A YOUNG MAN'S FANCY

STAGE DOOR

DEAR RUTH

LIFE WITH FATHER

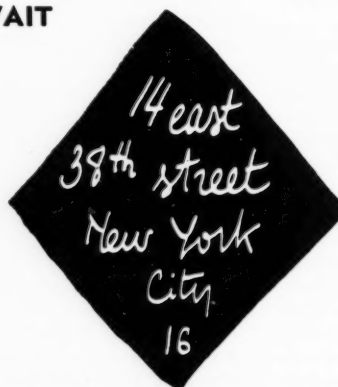
YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU

YEARS AGO

ARSENIC AND OLD LACE

HEAVEN CAN WAIT

JUNIOR MISS

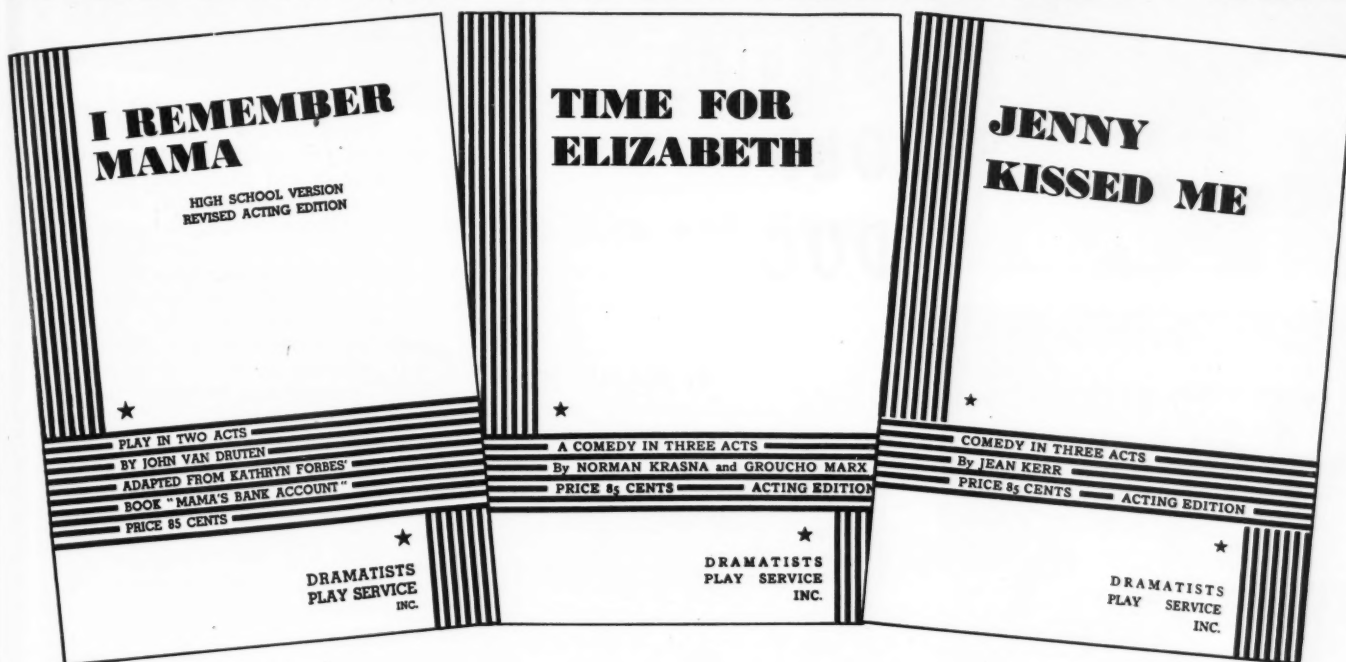


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Nowadays the public has to pay more for nearly everything it buys. The plays whose fees ("royalties") we reduced in September are selling better than ever. Why the reduction? There are a great number of high schools that have not been able to use such plays as we advertise on this page, and we want them to have a chance to do so.

The fee on JUNIOR MISS is now \$25 a performance (Formerly \$35-\$25)

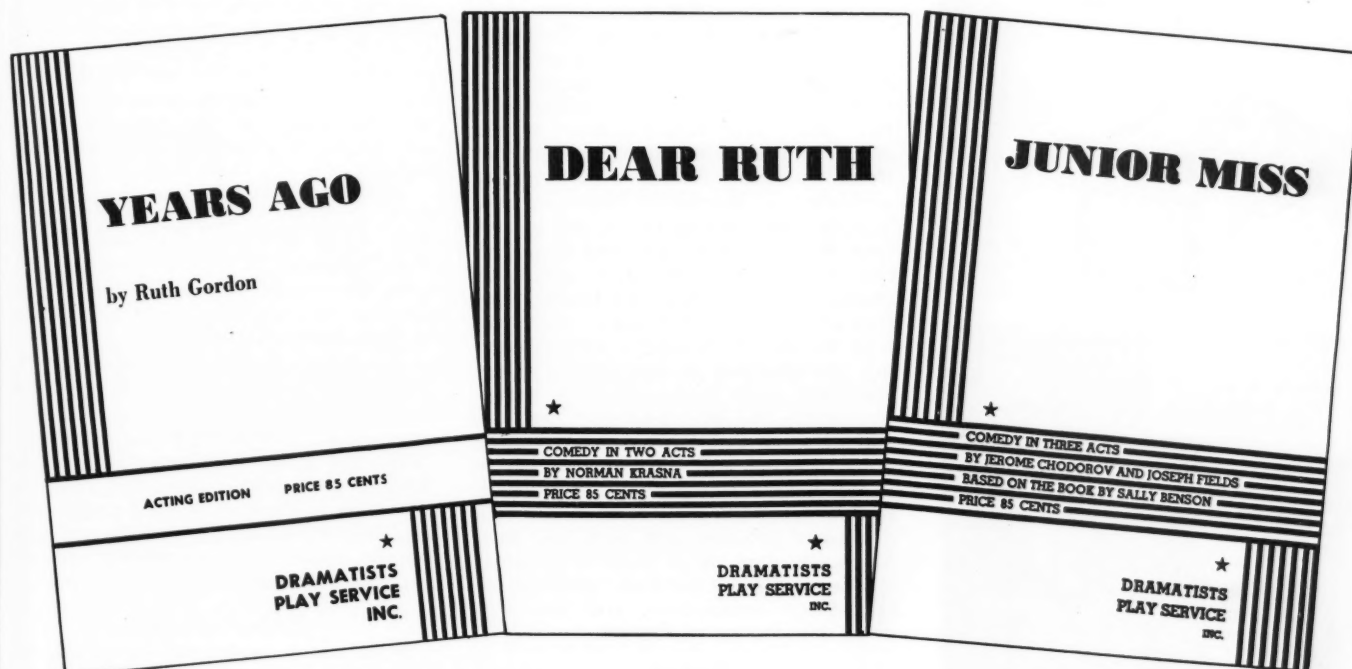
The fee on YEARS AGO is now \$35-\$25 (Formerly \$50-\$25)

The fee on JENNY KISSED ME is now \$25 a performance (Formerly \$35-\$25)

The fee on DEAR RUTH is now \$25 a performance (Formerly \$35-\$25)

The fee on TIME FOR ELIZABETH is now \$25 a performance (Formerly \$35-\$25)

The fee on I REMEMBER MAMA is now \$25 a performance for high schools (Formerly \$50-\$25)



DRAMATISTS PLAY SERVICE, Inc.

14 EAST 38TH ST., NEW YORK 16, N. Y.



Four scenes from *Old Doc*, presented by the Tilton-Northfield High School, Tilton, N. H., Troupe 1127, Wilbur Willey, Director.

PLAY OF THE MONTH
Edited by Earl W. Blank

Staging OLD DOC

By WILBUR WILLEY

OLD DOC, a three-act comedy-drama, by Jean Lee Latham. Six men, nine women, one interior. Royalty, \$25. Dramatic Publishing Company, 1706 S. Prairie Avenue, Chicago 16, Illinois.

Suitability

OLD DOC is a great play for several reasons: appeal, characterizations, value, life-like situations. It is a good combination of comedy and drama, which means audience appeal plus dramatic opportunity for a young cast. This is a reasonably easy play to produce, offering no great technical difficulties. It is a play which offers acting opportunities as well as excellent dialogue. It is a production that even an inexperienced group can project, and bring from their audience smiles and laughter — and tears.

Plot

Old Doctor Hillary is a gruff but sincere and kind-hearted man, happy in his belief that his son Bob is coming home from medical school to practice with him. But Young Doc has been offered a rich and easy city practice with Dr. Brand, a society doctor with a pretty, sophisticated daughter. There are two complications: Young Doc is still in love with his home-town girl, and he hasn't the nerve to tell his father about his change of plans. His girl breaks their engagement, and Bob goes on a trip with the Brands, leaving a note explaining the situation to his father. When Old Doc reads it, he suffers a stroke. Neighborly Ma Brown fakes a telegram, making him think his son is coming home after all, and Old Doc dies happy in this belief. Young Doc is angry with well-meaning Ma for forcing him into a death-bed promise, and says so. Then Ma shows him, in a scene with great emotional force, the real meaning of Old Doc's associations, and leaves a great decision up to the son.

Casting

The play presents a great variety of character roles. The characters have limitless opportunities for reacting to each other in realistic, believable ways. All the characters are of the *developing*

type, which to me means that each has a chance to show *change* brought about by the action of the play. The lead must be able to blend gruffness with kindheartedness, and two of the characters must develop accents (Italian and Irish).

There are two juveniles whose types are found in any high school. There are Old Doc's patients: Lois, vivacious, frank, brisk and a bit hard-boiled; Mary, a shy and frightened girl, who is given self-confidence; Mrs. Cronin, a large and hearty Irish woman whose 20 years of marriage to a man who goes on "rare and magnificent tears" have not daunted her spirit and courage; Mrs. Rossi, poor and appreciative Italian; Mrs. Mellon, a hypochondriac whose devotion to Old Doc's procedures brings results. The play also presents an efficient lawyer; a jolly, tactless old gentleman; a super-sophisticated city girl and her artificially correct doctor father; a young, understanding nurse engaged to Old Doc's son, an undecided new medic; a little old lady with warm understanding — perhaps the star of the show; and Old Doc himself, whose kindness and gentleness are covered by an exterior of gruffness and vigor.

Directing

Because the situations in the play are so believable, it is easy for the actors to fall naturally into the right type of action. There are a few scenes, however, which need special attention if they are to be effective. The director must create much excitement, confusion and rush at the end of act one, but this atmosphere must seem an everyday occurrence in Old Doc's house. The *very same* mood must be created at the end of the play, but with some different characters. The audience must feel that there is almost a repetition of something they have seen before.

The end of both scenes in act two must, in direct contrast, present pathos. The mood of the entire play ranges from comedy to human drama, and even the comic characters must show genuine concern throughout the illness of their beloved doctor.

The tempo is especially brisk in acts one and three, and should be medium in act two.

Rehearsals

We had three major rehearsals a week for six weeks, with many other rehearsals for individuals or small groups. We also had rehearsals to smooth out any trouble spots we encountered during our major rehearsals.

Stage Problems

With minor exceptions, our stage set followed the floor plan in the play book. Because our stage is a small one, we eliminated the two small chairs by the window down right, and the small chair down left. We also eliminated the extra doctor's desk and chair, which is meant

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to appear only during one scene. Because there is a line referring to this furniture, we changed the script to indicate that they were in another room.

Lighting

Old Doc presents no lighting problems. Floor or table lamps are needed, since act three takes place in the evening. We used clear overhead and border lights, and amber footlights. Blue lights and shadows are effective at the end of act two.

Costuming

No costuming problems. Following is a costume plot: Mrs. Rossi: cheap black dress and white apron. Janet and Dick: typical casual adolescent clothes, dress-up for last act. Pa: old work clothes for first part of play, best suit for act three. Ma: old fashioned gingham dress, and best black dress; a sewing apron is also a necessity. Margaret: smart sports dress in act one, nurse's uniform for remainder of play. Lois: sport clothes, and an apron as a sort of after-thought. Mary: housedress on first entrance, then attractive travel clothes. Mrs. Cronin: print dresses; a wide-brimmed hat for act one. Hepple: conservative suit. Old Doc: baggy suit, except for brief appearance at the end of act one in his best suit. (This is a quick and complicated change which will necessitate

careful rehearsing.) Bob: summer tweed, then a dark suit. Dr. Brand: tweeds; dark suit for last entrance; hat, cane, and gloves. Helen Brand: on each appearance she wears a different outfit, each highly fashionable. Mrs. Mellon: act one, street clothes; remainder of play, silk dress and apron.

Make-up Plot

Mrs. Rossi: young woman, Italian. Janet and Dick: juvenile. Pa: old-age, lines, gray chin beard. Ma: old-age, lines, white hair. Margaret: young woman. Lois: young woman. Mary: young woman. Mrs. Cronin: late middle age, lines, slightly gray hair, black eye for act one. Hepple: middle age. Old Doc: old age, lines, white hair. Bob: young man. Dr. Brand: middle age, hair graying at temples; small, neat mustache. Helen Brand: young woman, make-up overdone. Mrs. Mellon: late middle age, lines, graying hair.

Budget

Royalty	\$25.00
19 play books, @ 75c	14.25
Tickets	4.50
Make-up	3.00
Janitorial service	6.50
Ticket selling prize	2.00
Paint and stage repairs	5.00
	\$60.25

Of course the budget can be altered to fit local conditions.

Publicity

We used the following publicity procedures to increase ticket sales: radio announcements; posters in school, town, and neighboring schools and towns; prize to person selling most tickets, plus one free ticket for every ten sold (entire student body); letter and two free tickets to the dramatics directors in nearby schools (this helps inter-school goodwill as well as increases ticket sales); newspaper write-ups every week during rehearsals, plus a picture the last week; announcements in school notices; free tickets to the local doctors; play preview in school assembly.

Results

In addition to literary and entertainment value, *Old Doc* presents both a moral and educational lesson. It points out the advantages of neighborliness, the results of truth, the self-respect brought about by personal integrity, the rewards of generosity, and the inherent goodness in all people. It is a refreshing play for these troubled times. It is a play that one can believe in, that a director can enjoy working with, and that a cast will love from the first reading to the final performance.

Next Month: Green Valley

SHORTS LONG on ART

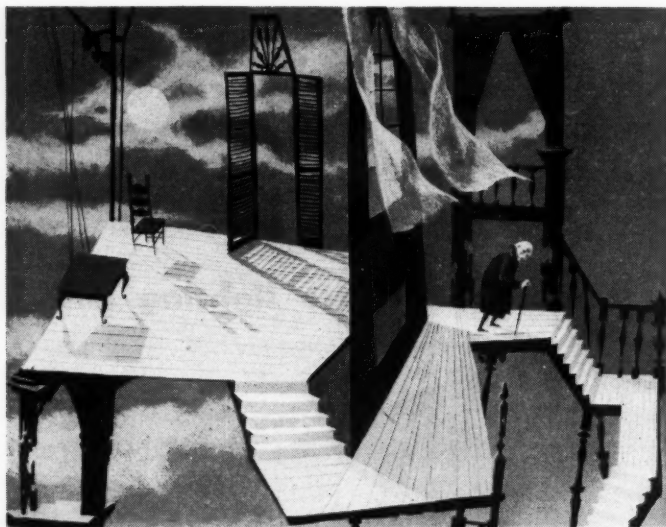
By H. KENN CARMICHAEL

THE notion that pioneering is an ingredient of progress in any field of human activity—that pioneering is not something that took place only in the past—is simply illustrated in the contemporary history and future plans of United Productions of America. UPA, as a corporation, is seven years old; it existed as an idea, for two years prior to its founding, under the name of Industrial Films and Poster Service. Its present head, Stephen Bosustow, is its founder.

Many readers will identify UPA as the producers of a currently popular cartoon series featuring the nearsighted *Mister Magoo*. Others may recall the Academy Award film, *Gerald McBoing-Boing*, another UPA product whose hero speaks only in sound effects. Still others will remember *Rooty Toot Toot*, an animated motion picture based on the legendary tale of Frankie and Johnny. In 1948 UPA signed a five-year contract with Columbia Pictures under which these UPA short subjects are released; the story of the company's claim to this distinction is the story of a pioneer.

Stephen Bosustow's first public recognition came when at the age of eleven he won a school watercolor contest in his home town of Victoria, B. C. Soon his family moved to California where he continued his art studies and regular schooling. For two years after leaving school Bosustow handled the traps for small dance bands. He then found a niche where he could make his art pay off by becoming a painter for a small animated film company. In a short time he moved up into positions with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Universal, and Disney—all in the field of animation.

Before he left Disney's studio he had become a writer and story sketch-artist. He helped with the final animation of *Snow White* and did most of the story work on *Bambi* and *Fantasia*. During those years Bosustow nursed a compelling desire for more freedom of expression; a desire to give freer reign, somehow, to the ideas and genius of artists in his field; a desire to pioneer into the world of line, movement and color which *Fantasia* had opened up in America. He was familiar with the experiments in abstract animation carried on abroad; he was convinced that here in the United States there was room for similar explorations and that there was an audience waiting for them.



Departing from the conventional form of the usual animated cartoon, United Productions of America is employing contemporary art forms in its current production work on an adaptation of Edgar Allen Poe's story, *The Tell-Tale Heart*.

Bosustow left Disney's in 1941, during a lay-off of a large number of artists. He went to work as a "production illustrator" for the Hughes Aircraft Company, and in one year became head of the department. The position gave him his first executive experience and working contacts with business men. That training has contributed to the growth and effective management of UPA.

Stephen Bosustow's first important contracts for animated cartoons were made with the Army. His infant company turned out a number of excellent short films for Frank Capra's Army motion picture unit on such difficult subjects as *Fear*. Utilizing bold contrasts, easily identifiable symbols, dramatic movement, and telling music and effects, Bosustow gave a new look to Army training films.

Ted Geisel, who now writes children's books under the pen-name of Dr. Seuss, was an officer in Frank Capra's unit at the time; it was he who had brought Bosustow's talent to Capra's attention. Just two years ago Geisel brought his own story of "Gerald McBoing-Boing" to UPA's president. It was Bosustow's turn to recognize talent; he promptly bought the story and put it into production. The resulting film won the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Award for the best cartoon of 1950 and, in 1951, received special recognition from the British Film Academy.

All told, UPA animated films have picked up four Academy nominations and one "Oscar"—all this in a four-year period. There is good reason to believe that the latest release, *Madeline*, showing only in New York at this writing, should net still another first place in the 1952 balloting.

Madeline is a new experience in the theatre of animated cartoons. Adapted

with consistent honesty and rare taste from a children's story of the same name, the picture creates a delightful interval of pure theatre. The artists at UPA have captured the child-world of the book's original illustrations and set it singing to color, movement and sound. Briefly, the story tells how *Madeline*, one of twelve little identical French girls, achieves the distinction of having her appendix taken out—while the eleven identical desolated sisters cry out for identical scars. At all times charming and winsome, *Madeline* contains moments of sheer delight.

All the UPA cartoons—whether for entertainment or industrial use—are characterized by a frank admission that the cartoons are caricature. The human beings are "stylized" as thoroughly as the backgrounds. The people are identifiable as people, but they move with no poor imitation of photographic accuracy; instead they are genuine abstractions, with their principal characteristics elaborated in cartooned shapes, colors and action.

Consider the street crowds through which *McBoing-Boing* threads his way to work. The people are transparent bodies, created primarily of lines and pastel colors; the torsos lean in the direction of movement and travel undisturbed and undistorted across the screen; only the busy legs and feet betray their means of locomotion. Little *McBoing-Boing*, however, can be seen in vivid color in the midst of the ghost-like crowd, jostled by the press of nameless strangers. Suddenly he makes a noise that is a deafening explosion (Gerald eschews the words of ordinary speech and communicates only in sound effects): the electrified forms of the throng burst apart to let Gerald pass through, shock recorded in every feature and line. Gerald *McBoing-Boing*,

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By Elizabeth Trotter. 7m 8w. Price 85¢ Royalty \$25.00

LITTLE WOMEN

By Roger Wheeler. 4m 7w. Price 60¢ Royalty \$10.00

ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER

By Charles George. 6m 6w. Price 60¢ Royalty \$10.00

THE BARRETTS

By Marjorie Carleton. 6m 6w. Price 85¢ Royalty \$25.00

LARRY

By Robert Illingworth. 14m 8w. Price 85¢ Royalty \$25.00

SHERLOCK HOLMES

By Charles George. 7m 5w. Price 60¢ Royalty \$10.00

MONSIEUR BEAUCAIRE

By Booth Tarkington. 14m 7w. Price 75¢ Royalty \$10.00

RIP VAN WINKLE (in 4 Acts)

By Joseph Jefferson. 7m 3w — extras. Price 85¢ Royalty \$15.00

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free of the crowd, continues unhindered on his way to work. As suddenly as they separated, the bodies of the crowd resume their original positions; the torsos lean forward and the busy feet go to work; the background rushes by.

Sometime next year the public will see still another departure from conventional animation shorts. Stephen Bosustow and his staff are still seeking the happy meeting ground of mass entertainment and artistic maturity. They have skirted it in *McBoing-Boing* and *Mister Magoo*; they have trod it lightly in *Madeline*. In 1953 the motion picture world will see a cartoon adaptation of *The Tell-Tale Heart*, Edgar Allen Poe's familiar tale. The illustration accompanying this article is a preliminary study from one scene of the film and gives an inkling of what is in store. Employing, as they have in many pictures, contemporary art forms, the UPA staff is still pioneering. If *The Tell-Tale Heart* can match the box-office appeal of Gerald McB. (*McBoing-Boing* was rated the top money short in a 1952 exhibitors' poll), Bosustow will have set a new record. For nothing like the UPA treatment of the Poe classic has been seen on the American screen.

The very artistic freedom Bosustow envisioned in his earlier days is contributing largely to the success of UPA products today. His original staff of half a dozen has swelled to seventy-five, but the operations of the company are still

characterized by genuine respect for originality and creative talent. When a producer-director is assigned to a film (he himself may have proposed the particular production idea) he is given complete artistic autonomy. He selects his own staff artists as well as those artists outside the studio whom he will need for the production. UPA has employed on a single-production basis dozens of nationally known painters, musicians and actors. Within the framework of this group, the producer guides the individual energies that create the film. There is no interference; the test is not the approval nor disapproval of UPA's president. The test is at the local theatre. The contract with Columbia Pictures assures the film's distribution; the response at the box-office determines its merits.

UPA's production in the commercial film field have been as distinctive as the entertainment shorts. Outstanding is a recent public information picture made for the American Cancer Society. A constructive and interesting story is made of the modern methods for detection and cure, without either minimizing the seriousness of the disease or exciting audiences to unreasoning fear. The film is completely animated.

Equally successful has been the sales film, *More than Meets the Eye*, recently completed for CBS Radio. Here the artists at UPA had to resolve an apparent paradox: the selling of a strictly

sound medium (radio) through a medium that is generally regarded as primarily *visual* (motion picture). A beginning to the solution was found in the use of images on the screen that were sufficiently abstract to allow an audience to read their own meanings into the shapes. Naturally the images had to be recognizable and specific enough so that the audience, hearing the accompanying sound, could grasp the story point.

During the entire film, including opening and closing titles, sound plays a role superior to picture. In the customary film *credo* the soundtrack must be subordinate to the screen image. By contrast, little of the visual imagery of *More than Meets the Eye* has meaning apart from the sound, whereas the soundtrack alone can carry the story in an unbroken sequence. If this is a denial of the primary function of motion pictures, then it's merely a happy accident that the film has proved to be an unusually powerful sales piece. It appears more likely that a good part of the secret lies in the effective use of abstract shapes and symbolic patterns on the screen in much the same manner as radio uses sound. In radio the listener is stimulated to provide his own visual images; in *More than Meets the Eye* the viewer is similarly stimulated to provide images — both by the soundtrack and by the visual clues on the screen.

(Continued on page 24)

Thespian Chatter

By Our
Student
Thespians

Miami, Florida (Thespian Troupe 495)

The Miami Jackson Troupe 495, under the direction of Sarah Martha Adams, has finished a banner year. The first productions of the school year were two nights of one-act plays sponsored by the Junior Class. Following fast and furious came productions of *Our Miss Brooks*, *Lost Horizon*, *The Hasty Heart*, and *You Can't Take It with You*, the last playing to a full house for two nights.

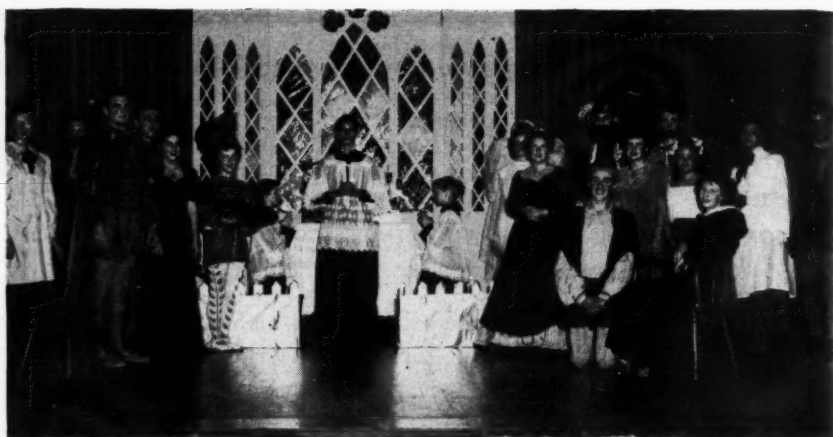
As Hollywood has "Oscars" Jackson High has "Wilburs." Recipients of these awards were: Best Thespian, Maria Palazzola; Best Actor, Stan DeHart; Best Actress, Mitzi Rafuse; Best Supporting Actor, Billy Kerns; Best Supporting Actress, Geri Schultz; Best Backstage Workers, Othea Bryant, Beverly Hilton.—*Ira Sanders, Clerk*

Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin (Thespian Troupe 144)

Wisconsin State College at Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 11 miles from our city, produces excellent plays throughout the year. Our Troupe charts and pays for the bus to transport Thespians and non-Thespians to those plays. Chippewa Falls has an active Little Theatre which does two or three plays a year. We attend and participate and aid that group in its productions. Each April or May we (the Troupe) charter a bus to Minneapolis to see some worthwhile dramatic offering. Money made from our formal and one play of the year pays for that trip; each student buys his own ticket for the production. The tragic *Darkness at Noon* with Edward Arnold was the play this year.—*Barbara Harck, Secretary*

Normal, Illinois (Thespian Troupe 1156)

Dramatic activities in the University High School for the year 1951-52 consisted of a Junior Class Play presented during the fall of the year, a Senior Play in the spring, a Christmas assembly, the contest play which was also presented as an arena style theatre. The three-act plays produced were *Clementine* and *Our Town*. For the contest play the first act of *The Skin of Our Teeth* was presented. *Why the Chimes Rang* was chosen for the Christmas assembly program. The one-act plays presented were *The Marriage Proposal*, *Not a Man in the House*, *The Unsatisfactory Supper*, *The Pot Boiler*, and *Navy Blues in Bold*. Thirteen new members were initiated into the Thespian Troupe at the close of the school year. Joann Sears, a senior



Why the Chimes Rang, Victor Valley High School, Troupe 1092, Victorville, Calif., Katherine Matthews, Director.

and a charter member of Troupe 1156, was voted the best Thespian. Joann was also salutatorian of the senior class.—*Jack Bell, Scribe*

Falls City, Nebraska (Thespian Troupe 919)

Newly initiated Thespians of Troupe 919 have a year's record of point-earning activity behind them. Their first production was *Cheaper By the Dozen*, in which "our youngest of twelve" portrayed Mr. Gilbreth. A local speech contest was next on the agenda. Thespians received superior ratings, but they couldn't rest on their laurels because the district Speech Meet was coming soon. They again returned with all superiors. The busy dramatists then staged three one-act plays, *Fog on the Valley*, *The Summons of Saniel*, and *Hillbilly Sue*. The climax of the activities was the initiation ceremony when 11 students became Charter Thespians.—*Barbara Rush, Reporter*

Minneapolis, Minnesota (Thespian Troupe 763)

Arena style presentation of Moliere's *The Physician in Spite of Himself* made a striking beginning to this year's theatre activity. *What a Life*, the Henry Aldrich comedy about high school life, was next in the production schedule, followed by plans for the Thespian sponsorship of a seventh and eighth grade play, *Huck Finn*, to be given in the fall. Thornton Wilder's play, *Our Town*, was performed by members of the senior class as the final play of the season.—*Harriett Wolkoff, Secretary*

Casey, Illinois (Thespian Troupe 1219)

Troupe 1219 was granted a charter on April 28, and 13 members were initiated in an impressive ceremony on May 22 at the high school Honors Day Program. The three-act plays which we presented were *A Murder Has Been Arranged* and *Life with Father*.

A Christmas one-act play, *Boy on the Meadow*, was presented before three community groups and the high school.

Overtones was our one-act play contest entry. We placed first in district, second in sectional and participated in the state finals. Thespian officers were elected from Junior initiates so that they may function next year. Our sponsor, Mrs. Doris Raney Lee, is a charter member of Troupe 583.—*Phyllis Collins, Scribe*

Rocky River, Ohio (Thespian Troupe 65)

George Washington Slept Here, by Kaufman and Hart, deals with the hilarious struggles of Newton and Annabelle Fuller to have a "quiet little place in the country" in spite of Japanese beetles, waterless wells, crumbling ceilings, a caretaker who doesn't care, an over-sophisticated nephew and a wealthy uncle who isn't wealthy at all. The class of 1952 chose this popular comedy as their senior production which was very successful both dramatically and financially.—*Jane Tripp, Scribe*

Stanstead, Quebec, Canada (Thespian Troupe 1056)

Although many Thespian Troupes may be proud of their buildings in which they produce their plays, the one which our troupe uses is probably one of the strangest. The building about which I am talking is the Haskell Opera House which is situated partly in Rock Island, Quebec, Canada, and partly in Derby Line, Vermont. In other words, the stage is in Canada, and the audience is in the United States. Even though this building is not part of Stanstead College School, we regard it as our own, and therefore all purchases for use in our productions are bought to fit the staging of this unique building situated in two countries.—*Wilson Collins, President*

Mobile, Alabama (Thespian Troupe 852)

Integration of the Thespians wholeheartedly into the program of the school was the aim of Troupe 852 for the past year. The activities began with National Education Week when the Thespians showed relationship between democracy and our schools. Then giving a pano-

ramic view of the activities of the school on the occasion of a visit from an evaluation committee for the Southern Association, and finally a coordination of music and drama through a pageant, *A Crusade for Peace*, were highlights of such integration. In addition to this phase of the work three full-length plays were presented: *Marcheta*, *Lights Out* and *Mother Is a Freshman*. Of course there were one-act plays also. Noteworthy was the development of personalities of many members as a result of Thespian activities.—*Beatrice Pickens, Scribe*

Ardmore, Pennsylvania (Thespian Troupe 801)

The seniors of Lower Merion High of Ardmore, Pennsylvania, have shown in the past year how alert youths are able to produce an original musical play that expresses aptly the ideas of young people from the teen-age viewpoint. The play, *The Senior Feeling*, was written completely by the seniors all the way from dialogue and music to stage props. The production was more than a play, even more than a means for cooperative work — it actually developed among the residents of the community and the entire student body a spirit of brotherhood and good will never before so prevalent here.—*Fay Holden, Secretary*

Hyde Park, New York (Thespian Troupe 1091)

Participation in dramatics at F. D. Roosevelt High School has doubled during the current school year. Under the leadership of our new director, Mr. Henry Werle, we were allowed to expand our program and include three one-act plays for junior members which prepares them for the major three-act plays. Experienced members have profited by acting as student directors.

We are on the "growing edge." Our plans call for many more plays next year. In this year's competition our play, *Antic Spring*, finished third in the Hudson Valley. Probably the most successful of our plays this year were *Submerged*, *Some Women Were Talking*, and *The Monkey's Paw*.

We expect to admit 21 members when we return in the fall. It has been very encouraging to witness the rapid growth of our young troupe and the enthusiasm for dramatics that it has given our student body.—*Paul Miller, Scribe*

Tilton, New Hampshire (Thespian Troupe 1127)

It has been a busy year for our Thespian Troupe. First we helped stage the three-act play, *Old Doc*, with the seniors. The play was a success, playing to capacity audiences two nights. Next the music department staged the operetta, *Pirates of Penzance*, which starred five Thespian members in major roles. During the year we held two impressive troupe initiations, receiving 19 new members. Our final production was a one-act play, *Winter Sunset*, put on dur-

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ing an evening of entertainment. This cast got valuable experience at the state drama festival.—*Ann Lowery, Secretary*

Shaker Heights, Ohio (Thespian Troupe 815)

Troupe 815 of Shaker Heights High School reached a new high of 50 members this year. Following the Drama Department policy of producing a variety of plays, we presented for our major productions this year a folk play, *The Hill Between* by Lula Vollmer; a Shakespearean play, *As You Like It*; and a modern Broadway comedy, *The Curious Savage*. Besides providing a varied program of entertainment for our audiences, these shows provided an unusually large number of parts for our actors and actresses — 85 in all — with 40 (including the dancers, singers, and musicians) in *The Hill Between*, 34 (including a double-cast of girls) in *As You Like It*, and 11 in *The Curious Savage*.

After each of our initiations — one after each major play — it is our custom to attend as a group a play being produced at one of our Cleveland theatres. This year Thespians saw *The Winslow Boy* at the Cleveland Playhouse; two musicals, *Street Scene* and *Porgy*, at the Karamu Playhouse; and attended as guests of Karamu an arena style production of *Gammer Gurton's Needle*. We also enjoyed seeing the Cleveland Playhouse production of *As You Like It* after we had produced it at Shaker.—*Sally Brown, Secretary*

Jacksonville, Florida (Thespian Troupe 975)

The Landon High School Thespian Troupe has been outstandingly active this year, taking top honors in every competitive contest entered. Under the direction of our sponsor, Mrs. Betty Dowling, the troupe presented *The Day After Forever* at the Speech Festival sponsored by the University of Florida. This play and two of its actresses, Edith Dodd and Joyce Sandler, were awarded superior ratings. *Spreading the News* was awarded a plaque for the best presentation in a Duval County Drama Festival. The Little Theatre of Jacksonville awarded our Senior Class Play *The Adorable Spendthrift* its award for the best presentation in the county. Edith Dodd received a silver loving cup for her outstanding performance. Our most successful year was concluded with a banquet honoring the 27 new Thespians. At this time Mr. Pat Frank, noted author, spoke to us on *Opportunities in Television*.—*Marie Marjenhoff, Secretary*

Sinsinawa, Wisconsin (Thespian Troupe 11)

The major production of the year was Christopher Fry's, *A Boy with a Cart*, produced on May 4th by an all girl cast in a presentation which made use of modern dance techniques. To provide visual variety in meaningful movement for the people of South England, and to teach two modern dances incorporated into the script by the director, the

Academy employed a young talented pupil from the Frances Allis School of Modern Dance, in Chicago, Illinois. This young teacher, Robert E. Betker, came to the school on week-ends and taught the entire cast the principles of body movement. A graduate of Goodman School of the Theatre, a pupil of Miss Frances Allis, and an instructor in dance at De Paul University in Chicago, this young man devised unique, incisive choreography for the Mowers and a beautiful ballet for the builders of Cuthman's church. The choir of the People of South England developed considerable skill in interpreting lines through body movement with the assistance of this training. — *Pauline Lambert, Secretary*

Scottsbluff, Nebraska
(Thespian Troupe 819)

Thespian Troupe 819 met for their first meeting September 25, with 29 active members. A highlight of our formal initiation was an original melodrama written and produced by Pick Wiles. An evening of one-act plays was presented in March at which time the Thespian play was chosen to go to the district contest. In February the Gering drama students were our guests. At this program, last year's "Best Thespian" was present and gave a play cutting. Thespian Troupe 819 climaxed the year, May 12, with a spring banquet and presentation of next year's officers. — *Margie Howard, Secretary*

Moscow, Idaho
(Thespian Troupe 56)

Troupe 56 completed a very active year by producing *Our Miss Brooks* as the all-school play under the able direction of the sponsor of our Troupe, Mrs. Frank G. Burford. We produced two other plays, *Mother Is a Freshman* and *Nine Girls*, to extremely enthusiastic audiences. Our one-act play, *Balcony Scene*, was entered in three festivals receiving a superior rating. Drama Class activities included *Sham*, *A Happy Journey*, *Common Clay*, and *Ballad of Youth*. These were produced arena style creating a great deal of interest from the actors, actresses and audiences. — *Connie Klaoren, Secretary*

Wood River, Illinois
(Thespian Troupe 733)

Troupe 733 of the National Thespians got off to a Fourth of July start with a production of *Seven Sisters* in November, and continued straight through the year with an active and varied dramatic arts program. For the first time in our school's history an original musical comedy was presented, *Come to the Fair*, and it was certainly one of the highlights of our school year. The Thespians also produced *One Foot in Heaven* and six one-act plays for assembly programs and dramatics club meetings. We also helped produce the annual Christmas pageant and several outstanding radio programs via WOKZ, Alton, Illinois. Our annual Thespian banquet was attended by 96



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students. All this dramatics activity was under the fine leadership of our new sponsor, Mr. Richard Claridge. — *Sue Clinton, Secretary*

ON ART

(Continued from page 21)

For example, the "story line" concerns a CBS sales representative who rehearses his sales talk as he takes the commuters' train to town and then successfully sells a prospective client in the latter's office. We hear the salesman's voice (as well as the voices of others and hundreds of sounds encountered in everyday living) but we never see the salesman. Instead, we follow his briefcase from his home, aboard the train, along the streets and into the client's office. We see an abstract pattern of his footsteps; the symbolic agitation of the air as the train's bell clangs; the abstraction of radio waves in the atmosphere. People are not represented on the screen; we see only the things they handle or abstractions of the sounds they make. The lively soundtrack does not limit itself to narration and effects; an original musical score assists in the storytelling. In an engaging way the pictures supplement the sound.

Of course, what UPA may have done is to illustrate exactly the sales superiority of television over radio, for the excitement this film brings to the mo-

tion picture screen can as readily be brought to the screen of the home TV set. It is this very talent—the ability to bring fresh visual excitement to animation—that makes UPA screen productions unique.

This same visual excitement pervades the novel transitions that UPA has created for the new Stanley Kramer film, *The Four Poster*, adapted from the recent stage success. In rapidly moving story-telling style, backed by a musical score, these cartoon "bridges" link the episodes of *The Four Poster* with additional events involving the two characters. They serve to add fresh humor and charm, as well as extension into the social background of the action.

Stephen Bosustow has a major project in view which waits only for a sponsor with both adequate faith and adequate capital. He wants to do a feature-length cartoon based on the James Thurber reflections on "The Battle of the Sexes." The preliminary sketches are distinctly Thurberish; the story treatment will no doubt be faithful to Thurber's accounts. Bosustow's own faith in his audience is unshaken; no matter what the doubters may say about the immaturity of the American film public, he's counting on them to rise to the occasion of Mr. Thurber's satirical wit. Stephen Bosustow is still a pioneer in spirit.

THEATRE

(Continued from page 15)

the entire cast discharges the work with apparent relish and understanding.

Anthony Parella is attempting to get a series of plays — new and old — into the little President Theatre on West 48th Street. During the past several seasons this house has been the headquarters of the Dramatic Workshop, the school conducted by Dr. Erwin Piscator. It is one of the few theatres directly in the Broadway area that is small enough for an experimental group and towards which the theatre unions are apt to look with a lenient eye.

At the President, Mr. Parella has launched what he hopes will be a permanent theatre group. His first attraction, W. Somerset Maugham's *The Sacred Flame*, is currently on view. The Maugham of this play is a vastly different individual than the one who is responsible for the films which are finding current favor in movie houses all over the world. This is a less cynical man and a less facile one. He had not yet completely acquired the technique of writing which hides technique. The bare bones of the plot of *The Sacred Flame* do sometimes protrude.

Maurice Tabret is an invalid. In the early sequence of the play we are told that he will very probably never be a whole person again. His wife, however, is devoted to him and is making the best of a very tragic situation. Maurice's mother too has risen to the crisis admirably and is a great source of strength to both the invalid and to her daughter-in-law. The invalid's death comes as a blow but also as something of a blessing to all. Not until Nurse Wayland insists upon an autopsy does anyone suspect foul play, but she is so convinced of it that she pushes her point. It would not be fair to divulge the ending — such a trick would rob everyone of the suspense that is so essential. The skeletal quality of the play, however, permitted many in the audience at the performance we attended to guess the solution long before Maugham intended that they should.

It was a great pleasure to see Frances Starr back upon the stage. Miss Starr has enacted more than 120 roles during her stage career, but her appearances in recent years have been too infrequent. One of David Belasco's great stars, Miss Starr evinced all of the skill that has made her famous. Patricia Wheel did an excellent job as the daughter. The production was directed by John Reich.

The only other premiere in the Broadway district has been *An Evening with Beatrice Lillie*. This is the offering which was so popular along the summer circuit during the recent straw-hat season. Miss Lillie, assisted by Reginald Gardiner, is doing many of her (and of her audience's) favorite selections. Review of this, however, will appear in a later issue of DRAMATICS.

The theatre off Broadway is just getting into action too. Next week the Equity-Library Theatre will present its first bill of the new season, Bernard Shaw's *Getting Married*. The Sage of Malvern's study of the pitfalls and pleasures of matrimony was presented locally in the ANTA Play Series. It will be a treat to have another production of the play on the boards — if only as briefly as the Equity-Library limited engagement. The Equity-Library Theatre is the showcase sponsored by Actors' Equity Association. In the production inexperienced players are given the opportunity to work with Equity members and under professional directors. Producers and agents attend the ELT showings and thus very often a new player has secured a job.

The groups in Greenwich Village remain about the same. After a brief run of Daniel Polis' *Fortress of Glass* at the Circle in the Square — the arena stage at Sheridan Square — the very successful production of Tennessee Williams' *Summer and Smoke* is again on view. *Widowers' Houses* continues at the Greenwich Mews Theatre and the American Lyric Theatre is inviting customers to the Provincetown Playhouse on Macdougall Street.

Some extremely interesting reports have been made of late concerning the building of new theatres in our theatre district. Many of you know that no theatres have been constructed for the housing of legitimate shows in many years. The problems that confront the theatre are — in large part — rooted in the real estate situation. Land values have been so exorbitantly high that any building in the area is faced with a high rental and taxes. Our zoning and building regulations do not permit a legitimate theatre to be housed in a building with any other purposes, though a movie house can be. This is a hold-over from the days when theatre fires were a very real danger. Those interested in the welfare of the theatre are endeavoring to amend this ruling so that a theatre can be part of an office building or a hotel, thus reducing the financial burden of operating the theatre. Good luck to them!

It is a pleasure to report that the early curtain has met with approval. Almost every current attraction raises its curtain at 7:00 p.m. on Monday evenings. For years large numbers of audiences (particularly the commuters to the suburbs) have requested a break of this kind. They complain that there is too long an interval between the time they leave the office and the rise of the curtain. Then too they do not get home until the wee hours of the morning. With the curtain at 7:00 the production is over about 9:30 and people can take to their beds at a reasonable hour. I have attended two early curtain evenings and found them most agreeable.

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DIALING

(Continued from page 14)

hours. (Which can explain why parents have narrowed visits to shows to the traditional Friday and Saturday nights.) TV has erased these problems.

You may very well ask what all of this has to do with you. A good deal. You are interested in histrionics and drama, no matter at whom the production is aimed. Children's radio and television programs have always thrived and should be important to the person making dramatic work his aim. To ignore it is like claiming that a liver specialist need know nothing about the remainder of the body.

The Pet Shop

According to recent estimates, there are some 20,000,000 cats in this country. About ten per cent are vagrant; 40 per cent "board" with families; and the other 50 per cent earn their keep by acting as rat catchers in factories, stores and a host of other places. That means that a very large number of the felines in this country are affiliated in some way with human beings. Or, conversely, it means that a great number of people are interested in cats. Then there is that vast group of dog owners and fanciers. Add to both of these the folks who own alligators, white mice, turtles, a wide variety of fish, hamsters, guinea pigs, canaries, parrots, frogs, and other friends that walk, crawl, fly, or swim, and you can very easily see why a program of this sort—especially when it is done so well—should have a large audience.

Not only can it boast of wide appeal simply because so many people like animals, but the items it brings to the viewer are a good combination of the usual mixed with the unusual. For instance, what could be as common as a chicken? We see these fowls so very often—most usually in a cooked state—that we never stop to realize that this food we're eating had to be hatched before we could eat it. You've heard that chicks come from eggs, but have you ever seen the actual hatching process? Probably not.

Gail Compton, proprietor of *The Pet Shop*, corrected this situation by having eggs hatch on the show. He had enough eggs, in various stages of incubation, to assure himself and the audience of a newly hatched chick for every minute of the half hour of air time.

Compton, who has been described as a "low pressure guy with a burr crew cut, who never puts on the dog unless it is brought to the show," may be new to viewers (the show has celebrated its third birthday), but he is no Johnny-come-lately with animals. Matter of fact he was the Farm Editor of the *CHICAGO TRIBUNE* for nine years before appearing on TV. Along with his daughter Gay he does an excellent job of conducting the stanza. Of course the two of them have able assistants. There are Charlie,

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Snooky and Owl Eyes (three monkeys), Sissy (a poodle), Tigger (a chihuahua), Mac (a macaw), Goosie (a duck), and Tin Can (a grey-bearded goat), besides the pups of dubious ancestry that cavort in *The Pet Shop* window. All in all, a well assorted, entertaining crew.

The proprietor asserts that while the program shows something of the personalities of the pets, it also illustrates graphically some of the traits of the owner. "You can tell much about the master by observing the pet," he says. "And eight out of every ten American families own one. After all, a pet's behavior accurately reflects that of his owner. If your dog is a bum, it's 90 per cent your fault."

You mustn't get the impression that this is a program devoted to dogs or cats. True, these four-legged, furry beasts are man's most usual friends, but there are others, plenty of others. For instance, there was the woman who displayed the week-and-a-half-old baby squirrels which she had been feeding with an eyedropper since finding them in their nest with their dead mother.

Then there was the week-old Shetland pony—purportedly the youngest to have appeared on TV at any time. He was being shown by his nine-year-old owner, a little girl whom viewers remembered as having brought a bantam hen onto the show so that it could be trained to stand on its head and to jump rope. "Silly!" you say? "Unfeasible!" "Impossible!" Maybe your doubts are well-founded. At least they are based on what seems logical, but you are forgetting three things.

First, the hopes of a child—or any person—need not be logical. Second, audience-seekers (publicity men, entertainers, or what-have-you) are just as illogical in trying to attract people. And third, the child and the audience-seeker might very well be right. Then what happens to the believers in logic?

You've heard any number of times of a dog and a cat being good friends, but it does not make sense because you know that dogs and cats are inveterate enemies. But there they are—and seeing is believing. It's even more difficult, perhaps, to give credence to a cat-turtle

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friendship, but one was shown on *The Pet Shop*. Where's the logic?

Certainly more rational was a talk (illustrated) by Art Thomen on how to build an outdoor fish pool. Practical methods for stocking were also given, as well as ideas for keeping cats from eating the finny residents.

Mr. Thomen, a fish hatchery expert, appeared on the show at one time to speak about fungous diseases in tropical fish, and to describe the simple home remedies that may be applied. One of the most virulent diseases to strike guppies, goldfish and fantails is Ich (pronounced "Ick"). Viewers were thus told how to eradicate this most stubborn disorder, to which scaly fish are prone.

But getting back to dogs and cats: a woman brought her Akita up once. An Akita, for those who don't know—and I didn't—is a Japanese member of the canine family. This one was sent to the States by a member of the armed forces in Korea.

Then there was the woman who brought her 24-pound short-hair (alley cat, to most of us) "Black Tom." He's pure jet, lays claim to being the "weightiest" alley cat around. Any contenders?

And let's not forget the lady who came to the show to prove that most people have the wrong idea about dachshunds. When you hear the name you are inclined to think of a low-slung, smooth-haired little dog available in only brown or honey-colored models. Wrong! Here were four different types: white-haired, smooth-haired, long-haired and dapple.

Then there were the identical German Shepherd pups that looked so much alike that even their own mother couldn't tell them apart. Couldn't tell her Bow from her Wow.

The tales of animal oddities could go on and on. The main way for such a program to attract an audience is for it to offer items that will beckon to viewers. By having a mixture of the unusual and the commonplace and by presenting them well, *The Pet Shop* has assured itself a warm reception.

MUSIC

(Continued from page 11)

with continuous action. Here music is the accompaniment for dancers. It can bridge the change in thought and mood from one scene to another. It can be the means of heightening the climactic lines of a closing scene or of preparing the audience for the episode that is to follow. It can perform while the curtain closes and the back stage crew rushes into position the props for the next scene, having a utilitarian purpose as well as providing an artistic touch.

Pageantry often presents a universal truth set forth in a prologue and proved through a series of episodes. As these proofs usually range over many centuries, and many lands and diversified situations, music can set the mood for the various scenes. The choir singing *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* can prepare the audience for the story of Martin Luther; the orchestra playing *St. Louis Blues* sets the mood for a scene of the Jazz Age. In pageantry well chosen music is an absolute necessity. Upon it can depend the success or failure of a production, whether a copyrighted script or an original one.

In drama the use of unobtrusive background music, like spots to intensify the light in certain acting areas, can help establish empathy between actor and audience — that subtle quality which can make or break a production. All of us have had the experience of being enthralled by some dramatic scene: of being deeply stirred by the romance, adventure or horror of the story portrayed. Music has often been used to heighten the effect, a device employed so very often on the radio or screen. Remember the zither whose strings twanged a sense of foreboding of breathless terror or sorrow throughout *The Third Man* movie.

On the radio it is an effective means of indicating the omitted portions of a full length play or of tying together the short scenes in a regular radio script. In this medium, where the actor must depend entirely upon his voice for the interpretation of a role, music is an indispensable ally. The dramatic director, writing his own or producing student-written scripts, should not omit this same use of music.

While incidental or background music is not often used in plays on the legitimate stage, the amateur production can make good use of it. High school students are not trained actors and difficult scenes of a deep intensity, especially closing lines of scenes, can be built up by the use of music.

If music is not part of a three act play, it still has its role to play in the planning of the amateur show. Selections by the school orchestra are a pleasant prelude to the play and afford relaxation (if well rendered!) during

intermissions. Even here an unwise choice can strike a discordant note in the evening's program. Consultations with the music director are necessary if the numbers are to be in keeping with the type and period of the play. Nothing could be more inappropriate than *Jazz Pizzicato* between acts of *Death Takes a Holiday*, nothing more appropriate than one of Bach's *Fugues* played during a presentation of *Eastward in Eden*.

In whatever phase of dramatics music is to have a part, it must be well cast. Whether vocal or instrumental, it must blend into the play so that it becomes an integral part of the production. Never must it seek to steal the show — even in a musical comedy where it has the lead. An orchestra that drowns the voices of a pageant choir or a musical comedy chorus or rhythm of a tap dancer's steps ceases to be a pleasure. If it is impossible to tone down the playing — an oft repeated criticism of amateur groups — better employ only the string section. In these circumstances the orchestra is the accompaniment and as such must be unobtrusive. The same caution can be given in the use of vocal background for an actor's lines, a device used rather frequently in pageants. The voices must be sufficiently muted to allow the spoken word to be clearly heard. At the same time the choral group must be trained to swell out in full tones as the actor's lines cease. During a student-written pageant on American Folk music the choir sang *I Hear America Singing* as a background for all narrator's verses. The rising and fading away of this group of 100 girls' voices was a most effective dramatic device. The same advice is needed for an instrumental group. In short, in radio parlance, when the spoken words fade out the music comes up, and in reverse, as the action starts the music must fade out gradually — so gradually that its end is unnoticed by the audience.

There has been only a slight reference to musical comedy. The use of music here is so obvious and all that has been said on the subject so applicable that there is no need for much further elaboration. As many schools produce original revues or musicals, I would, however, stress most strongly this point: if doing a musical comedy, use songs whose words tie in with the plot (if you can call it that) of the libretto. Then the music is not something thrust into the show but a means of carrying forward the text. One should study the paper bound books of popular songs, listen to the radio, as well as consider hits from current Broadway offerings and semi-classical numbers. The director should not be afraid of seeming low brow by using some of the popular pieces if they have some of the requirements of good music and suit the spirit and type of the show. The students

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know what will appeal and their judgment is usually to be trusted. A student-written book has a freshness and spontaneity which cannot equal the presentation of an copyrighted book. I strongly recommend appealing to the teen-ager's love of music and drama by letting him write and plan his own show with the director keeping in the background.

In doing an original musical for paid performance it is necessary to ask the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers for permission to use the musical selections. Like the playwright, the composer is protected by law. Since the orchestra is composed of students and the proceeds of the show go for educational purposes, the organization will grant the right to use the music gratis. An acknowledgment of the privilege should be printed on the programs.

Aside from these various uses of music in productions, it can be a help during rehearsals. While rehearsing some scenes from *Macbeth*, the boy who had the lead found difficulty in interpreting certain soliloquies. Learning that he was most sensitive to music, I had Bach's *Fugues* played. This established the proper mood and created an atmosphere of gloom, and the lines were interpreted with great feeling.

Where can we not use music in drama? Does not each well-written play have a certain rhythm, a cadence which must be felt by the director and actors and be projected across the footlights to make it a success? Without an understanding of timing, of increasing or decreasing of tempo, the beauty of a scene, the force of a climax is lost. The director beating out the tempo of a scene is the director of a symphony of characters who combine to form a composition called drama — a composition which can move the soul of man. Music and Drama, one and inseparable, are a perfect complement for each other.

TEACHER

(Continued from page 10)

and teacher training will meet your needs.

When you have chosen your college, and you come to choose your courses, branch out. Don't stick to acting and directing. Learn make-up, costuming, scene-design, lighting. Don't even limit yourself to theatre. Get at least one basic course in broadcasting, interpretation, choric speech, public speaking and debate, and the correction of speech defects.

You may remember that I used the term *Speech Arts* to include drama, that I referred to the college department of *speech* and drama. In high school teaching especially, you will find that the school administration will generally combine speech and drama and will expect you, as their specialist, to be able to handle anything that may come up. In addition to drama classes and play production, you may find yourself teaching classes in public speaking, coaching the debate team, and working with the students who have speech defects, and still have the school principal feel that he hasn't given you a thing outside your own field. Knowing that this situation exists, be prepared for it. Specialize in theatre since it is your first love, but remember that good high school jobs may depend on your knowing something of the other phases of the speech arts as well.

Now let's talk about teaching theatre in a college.

Perhaps I am being a bit previous in discussing college training now, but when you've tried college theatre for four years, you may decide that college is where you want to work. College theatre certainly has more freedom than high school. The physical plant may be much better equipped, and the students are more mature. Experimental productions, which can be very stimulating, are a definite part of college theatre. Conversely, there are fewer openings for college teachers. The average salary is far lower than that of the public schools, and most colleges, except government-owned state colleges, do not have a tenure system. However, there is a certain prestige that goes with college teaching, and college theatre has a reputation well equal to that of the community theatre and often rivaling that of Broadway.

If you decide on college teaching, what preparation will you need?

First of all, your choice of college will be the same as in preparing for high school teaching. You're still looking for an educational background in a good theatre department.

Perhaps you can take a few less required educational psychology courses and a few more professional ones, since colleges are not interested in stage requirements so much as in your personal reputation and ability. On the other

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hand, colleges are even more degree-conscious than high schools. A college seldom appoints anyone without an M.A. degree, and if you expect to rise from instructor to professor or to become head of a department, you will probably need to invest a lot more study, time and energy acquiring a third degree known as your doctorate or Ph.D. — Doctor of Philosophy.

One practical way to achieve your M.A. and some teaching experience simultaneously is through what is known as a teaching fellowship. After you are graduated from college and have your A.B. degree, if you are a good student and talented — and let's assume that you are, or you don't belong in this field — you apply for a teaching fellowship to a college which awards an M.A. in drama. If it is granted, this means that you will teach one or two freshman courses in speech or drama and will receive your tuition, board and room, and perhaps a small salary while you study for your own advanced degree. Usually you are required to take part in the college theatre. Certainly you are welcomed if you wish to do so.

I heartily recommend that you choose for your M.A. work a college other than the one in which you do your undergraduate study. In this way you acquire a much broader outlook and also get experience in two college theatres. Such experience will serve you in good stead if your goal is a permanent college position. A year in another college theatre also can be rewarding in itself. Again choose one with a good professional reputation. Many colleges have nationally-known theatres. The Ring Theatre at the University of Miami, in Miami, Florida, for instance; or the million dollar structure which you saw if you attended the Thespian National Drama Conference at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana; or The Penthouse Theatre at the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington.

A year working in set-ups like these is good preparation for any phase of the theatre, and in addition you'll have a year's teaching experience on your record. Then, M.A. in hand, you're ready to look for your permanent college position.

Whatever you decide to do, wherever you decide to teach, don't miss the opportunity to make active use of your dramatic training. And someday, when you have a national reputation in the educational theatre, you can sit back and say, "Just think, it all started in my Thespian Troupe!"



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PULSE

(Continued from page 9)

the plays and help in the final selection do not choose a play mainly because they are thrilled by it. They make their recommendation of a play because they think it is the most suitable to their stage, to their talent and within the scope of their backstage technicians.

Should anyone ask me what is the best play for high school production, I would answer this unhesitatingly by saying, "The royalty play is the best." I do not make this statement solely because I am a royalty playwright. I say this because I know that the best plays are royalty plays.

Why? Because more thought, better play construction and more time have been devoted to the script to make it a better play. When a playwright knows he is only to be paid a flat and not very complimentary sum for his finished script, and one to which all rights are to be sold in one package deal, he is not apt to concern himself with the finer aspects of good writing and a playable script. He is writing for one specific thing, *THE CHECK*. After that is cashed and the playwright has his money in hand, what does he care what happens to the play? He's got all he's going to get out of it. But the playwright who takes a new idea and assembles his thoughts, his talent and his experience in the task of putting them into dramatic form with a royalty in mind, will approach its writing with an entirely different angle. He realizes that to make his talent pay off, his play must be better than average, have greater public appeal and be within the scope of the actor for which it is intended. No one in his right mind is going to pay a royalty fee for a play that will not come up to the better-than-average standards. The playwright knows this and he will endeavor to write a script that will be in demand for many years to come, since production fees for performances of his work are his only means of being gainfully employed.

Royalties are placed on plays according to their worth. This is evident in the publisher's arrangement of their play properties under the \$5.00, \$10.00, \$25.00 and higher royalty categories. The higher fee your production budget will allow the better your play is going to be because the material you will work with will be better. Whenever you have the facilities and budget to meet the costs, I recommend that you accept the more difficult and expensive production as a challenge, if nothing else; for it is productions of the best that will test your talent and prove your growth.

The call to all potential actors has been posted on the school bulletin board. Try-outs will be held at such and such a time. You read it and the urge to act begins to stir inside of you. Per-

haps you have been waiting with bated breath for that notice to appear. Well, there it is! What are you going to do about it? Oh sure, you're going to show up for the try-outs. They all do, but how? Unprepared? Forget it; you'll never make it. You can't give something that you are unprepared to give. There's that little necessary something called talent. Just one glowing, sincere spark of it can do so much for you if you give it a fair chance to take root. You put your best foot forward at try-outs when you open your play book and give a clear, intelligent reading of the part assigned to you. Only a rare few are gifted in doing this without preparation.

You made it! You are one of the fortunate few, selected from so many, for your all-school play. What are you going to do about it? Wait for instructions? You can help your overworked director by your own self analysis. One of the surest ways to prepare yourself for that exacting evening ahead is to hurry home with your copy of the play. When you get there, don't flop down into a comfortable overstuffed chair like so much poundage of uncooked liver; get up on your feet and if you have a full-length mirror somewhere about the house, that is your first rehearsal spot. Before you open the play book, take a look at yourself in the mirror. Do you see anything that pleases you? And I don't mean *BEAUTY*. . . . Do you stand like someone who has been suddenly kicked in back of the knees? Straighten up and watch that diaphragm. Perhaps now is a good time to take a few steps backward and forward. . . . Pleased with yourself? Probably not. So try it again and again. Turn about a few times; that helps too. When you begin to walk less like a wobbly stick, then your sense of balance will begin to take effect. Now open your play book and read your part at random. Train yourself to speak clearly, distinctly and with a feeling for the part you are reading. Poise and preparation are the springboard for talent. Help yourself and you will help not only the director, but other members of the cast as well.

Finally, when the magic moment arrives and you are waiting in the wings for your entrance cue, don't go out on the stage thinking you are the whole cheese. If you do, I have news for you. You wouldn't be there performing if it weren't for your scenic artist, stage carpenter, costume designer, electrician, the property man and the publicity staff. Acting is only one phase of the theatre. Without all the parts working together in unison, the whole project can crumble in complete failure. So give credit where credit is due at all times.

Do you work on a large, small or an adequate stage? Your stage is the all determining factor of your limitations and expansion. If you haven't the

proscenium length and sufficient stage depth, you cannot present a play to your credit that demands pretentious proportions. It is commendable to be ambitious, but if you lack the necessary tools, accessories and an experienced backstage crew, you are doomed to headaches and heartaches. This quite often determines to a large extent the selection of the play to be produced. So don't quarrel with your director or the powers-that-be over the play that has been chosen. Consideration has been given to all the points of production and this is the play they have decided upon as being the best suited to meet your present needs.

The arena stage is new and still experimental, but not a thing to be considered lightly. Here is a definite challenge with changes in technique in directing and acting. You no longer have the dividing line of the curtain between you and your audience. You practically play in their laps and performing in such close proximity with your audience calls for complete confidence in yourself in order to divorce the nearness of your spectators from your performance. If you ever have the opportunity to try it, do so. It will be an experience well worth your while.

Your audience is a contending factor; for it is they and their strength of attendance that determine the great difference between a success and a flop. Do not give a seasoned audience a play with trite situations and a weak plot crammed with clichés and hokum obviously written for laughs and with no connection to the main thread of the play; nor should you present them with an "arty" play filled with allegories and psychosis.

Be ever mindful that your audience has paid specific revenue to be entertained. They do not come to your auditorium for a sermon. The curtain line is your audience's means for a hopeful escape from their daily problems into the realm of the make-believe. They want to look in upon the other fellow's troubles for a change and have that glorious, superior feeling of knowing the situations and the solutions before the characters do. There are more drama and heartaches borne on the shoulders of your audience before your curtain rises than the director, actor or the playwright can ever hope to achieve beyond the magic proscenium.

Give your audience an hour or so of reprieve from their daily routine of making a living. Fill them with the joy of laughter and intelligent drama. Send them out of your auditorium doors with the feeling that it was good to be with you, and to be with you again and again and again.

These four—the play, the actor, the stage, the audience—are the ingredients for a successful performance. Make the most of them!

MOVIE

(Continued from page 8)

Procuring of equipment was the initial step. For \$2,100 McMurphy bought a 16 millimeter Auricon Pro camera, plus the tripod, microphone, sound recording equipment, booms and lenses. Adequate lighting apparatus was obtained through material supplied and constructed by Harvey Pinner, college maintenance superintendent, and his crew. That wasn't the only time that Mr. Pinner appeared on the scene, for he played a main role in *Medea* to the very end. He always had ready answers to numerous technical problems.

In order to place the filming project in the college curriculum, a speech course, entitled "Advanced Production," was established. Open to anyone, the course offered six hours college credit for the twelve summer weeks, designated as the filming period. The cast and technical crew enrolled in the class met five nights weekly from 7 to 10.

In West Texas the weather is the basis of many decisions. So it was that nature caused the group to meet at night, for during the day the temperature stayed around 110 degrees under the powerful movie lights in the college gymnasium, which was the filming site. The gym proved to be a very desirable sound stage except for minor difficulty with acoustics. Spacious enough for one large set it also had enough room for five smaller sets. In addition curious visitors could be kept from underfoot by the mere turn of a key.

With the organization of the class the cast was selected. Other than several small changes the players giving the stage production were recast in their same roles. Three graduate students, all four-year veterans of the McMurphy College stage, played the main parts. Barbara Douglass, Big Spring, Texas, played *Medea*; Maurice Pullig, Sweetwater, Jason. In the stage production he appeared in the role of Creon, the movie part being portrayed by Jerry Powell, head of the Andrews High School Speech Department.

With cast and technical crew chosen, equipment purchased, filming location selected, one might assume at first it would be time for filming to start. But the real work was just beginning. A rigid filming schedule had to be outlined; costumes designed and made; outside shooting locations selected; the sets, first planned in intricate detail, had to be constructed.

James Plumlee, student costume designer from Odessa, after days of measuring, making original patterns and selecting materials, isolated himself for two weeks, preparing 29 classic robes. James McCollough, art director of Abilene, worked for a month with plaster of paris, moulding clay and papier-mache, making 12 Greek helmets; Jason's ship, the *Argo*; complete models

of every set for process shots; titles; and many other necessary projects.

At this point the male Thespians definitely proved to any doubting campus onlookers that besides acting, they were also adept at hard manual labor. The basic shooting scene was to be a large court-yard, 40 x 50 feet, centered with a stone altar and surrounded by walls, 16 feet high. The entire set was constructed by the men of the cast and crew, including Director Adams. Truckloads of rock were hauled in and placed in the gym to make the court-yard floor authentic. The college coaches were visibly disturbed at this process until they discovered the gymnasium floor was being protected with several layers of heavy tarpaulin and sand. Day after day the sound of hammering and sawing rang throughout the gym followed by the sanding, painting, retouching. Everything must be perfect, for the crew knew that, unlike the stage, a movie would reveal the slightest imperfection or artificiality.

Besides assisting on the construction of the set, Adams was busy with further preparations. The copyright could not be cleared on the translation of the *Medea* which had been chosen. The Robinson-Jeffers play, made famous by Judith Anderson, was not considered since it is a modern verse play based on the Greek original, but with modern psychology and a disintegration of the typical classical form. That left only one course for Adams to follow. He must make his own translation (which he did), basing his version on existing prose, poetic and literal translations of the Greek text, achieving a script in a highly modern idiomatic view, but completely faithful to the original drama. Preparing the screen scenario (that is, adapting the play script to movie script) followed. Adams wanted to make a genuine movie, taking advantage of the basic elements of movie-making technique rather than photographing a stage production. The complete Euripides play, adding no dialogue and changing no order of sequences, was employed so that the audience would be able to see and grasp the exact form of Greek Tragedy.

After a preparatory period of three months, it was now time to begin filming. Despite the fact that numerous lighting and sound technicians, make-up artists and script girls had to be briefed daily, along with other obstacles that arose, the McMurrians knew by now the actual filming would be the easiest phase of movie-making.

For 12 weeks the class met five nights a week, sometimes until the early morning hours. It wasn't just a night-time job for the filmsters. During the day Adams found himself confronted with one new problem after another. Perhaps it was the script that needed a slight revision; perhaps it was some of

the equipment temporarily on the blink; always it was something that demanded an immediate solution. The filming kept everyone on their toes day and night for long but exciting hours.

Several freak accidents, serious yet fantastic to the extent of hysteria, occurred. For instance, one night one of the heavy lights slipped from position and glazed the temple of the leading lady. Result? Though not seriously injured she was in a dazed state for several hours. At another time after going without sleep one night, Adams got a glass of water and a glass of gasoline confused. In reaching for the water he accidentally got the gasoline! However, several hours and one stomach pump later, he was all right.

At long last the filming was finished — an occasion which quite naturally called for a gala celebration by members of the cast and crew, who tired and weary perhaps were quite proud of their accomplishment. It wasn't all over yet though. After the film was developed, it had to be edited, some scenes re-shot, background music dubbed in, trick effects and titles added and composite duplicate prints made.

In a few weeks the McMurphy Thespians, along with top Texas theater figures, had an opportunity to view their work for the first time when the World Premiere was shown at the college with distinguished drama directors, critics and speech professors as guests of the college. Following this event the movie was made available for booking.

Exact cost of the project has not yet been determined. Regardless of the cost, which they kept to a minimum by watching closely every outside expenditure and using the facilities offered by the maintenance department, McMurphy is completely confident that its efforts will be compensated, for a new era has begun for the Speech Department. "Roll 'em," "Cut," "Re-shoot," "Lights, camera, action" — all terms that were new to the campus six months ago, are now here to stay. After this initial attempt production of succeeding movies will be easier. Probably the next film made will be a year's resume of activities for student promotion purposes.

It is planned to book the film commercially in order that drama groups, literary clubs, film societies, classical language organizations and other interested audiences will be able to see the movie. After November 1, prints of the film may be obtained by writing to Bill Adams, McMurphy Station, Abilene, Texas.

It was a difficult task, McMurrians will be the first to confess, but well worth every minute and dime invested. You too can be in the film profession. Just remember, "Toss pessimism to the four winds, and latch on tightly to patience, for with this recipe, 'We Made a Movie at McMurphy.'"



Why the Chimes Rang, Troupe 250, Central Valley High School, Greenacres, Washington, Robert Chenier, Sponsor.

TIMID!

(Continued from page 7)

on. High school students can, and do, perform well in Shakespeare's plays or eighteenth century comedies of manners when given the opportunity and the proper incentive. They are just as capable of doing such successful Broadway plays as *Years Ago* and *Dear Ruth*, and serious plays like *Lost Horizons* and *Outward Bound*.

2. Stick to royalty plays or non-royalty classics.

A royalty fee is not the only measuring stick by which the merits of a play may be measured, but it is obvious that the better plays usually cost money. Cheap plays are usually "cheap" in more ways than one. If royalty costs are prohibitive, there are excellent high school acting editions of such durable plays as Sheridan's *The Rivals* and Moliere's *The Would-Be Gentleman*. Many of these plays are effectively done in modern dress which further reduces the cost of production.

3. Use selective play lists rather than publishers' catalogs.

It is hard to imagine a publisher being perfectly frank about a play he is trying to sell. Obviously, every play in the catalog is a "sure-fire" success. Aside from factual information concerning the number of settings, acts, and the size of cast, the rest of the description of a play in the typical catalog is, generally speaking, uncritical. The best answer is for the director to read plays and to see plays. For those directors who are untrained in drama there are numerous aids that are helpful. Three old but still useful guides include: Blanch Baker, *DRAMATIC BIBLIOGRAPHY*; Milton Smith, *GUIDE TO PLAY SELECTION*, and Marion S. Tucker, *PLAYS FOR AMATEURS*. There are recommended playlists such as those published by the AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL THEATRE ASSOCIATION and the NATIONAL THESPIAN SOCIETY, and lists of plays performed printed in *DRA-*

MATICS MAGAZINE, THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF SPEECH, and PLAYERS MAGAZINE.

4. Seek the cooperation of informed persons.

It may be that the English teacher or the local librarian is well versed in dramatic literature and can offer helpful suggestions. If the high school is located near a college or university, then it is wise to enlist the aid of the professor who teaches drama or who directs plays in the college theatre. Too often there are no avenues of communications between the high school and the college in the same town. This is regrettable since both can help each other. I have always been delighted to give advice to high school directors and they often rendered valuable services to me likewise. Too many high school teachers assume an inferiority complex when it comes to approaching their colleagues on the college level for suggestion and help. A close, friendly relationship can be very stimulating and helpful to both parties concerned.

5. Spend more time in discussing suitable plays with your students.

Students are quick to respond when they feel that they are a part of the total process of play selection and production. If they learn about famous

plays of the past as well as significant contemporary plays, they will develop a more discriminating attitude toward play selection. This is part of the educational process and unless dramatics on the high school level is educational, it is not worth the time and effort expended by both the director and the students.

6. Have personal high standards.

It is sometimes necessary to be firm when it comes to choosing plays. If the teacher-director allows himself to be bullied into selecting inferior plays, he will find it harder to raise the standards in the future. A little firmness will often command respect and a good production will do the rest in "selling" a skeptical principal or a reluctant cast. One must be tactful, but the reasons for selecting good plays are far more respectable than the reasons for selecting poor plays. In other words, "don't be timid" when it comes to asserting your right to do something worthwhile.

The choice of plays is, in the last analysis, the most important single responsibility of the teacher-director. Let the choice be such that high school theatre will offer worthwhile educational experiences to the students, and cultural and artistic stimulus to the audience, both young and old.

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1 ACT PLAYS

Wilbur's Honey Bea, 3m, 4w	Wilbur Faces Life, 3m, 5w
Life o' the Party, 6m, 6w	Bobby Sox, 4m, 3w
Sure As You're Born, 3m, 3w	Wilbur's New Uncle, 3m, 4w
Wilbur Minds the Baby, 3m, 5w	Listen, Dad, 3m, 4w
Wilbur's Wild Night, 4m, 4w	Love Hits Wilbur, 2m, 4w
Wilbur Saw It First, 4m, 3w	Cute and Peppy, 8w
Foxy Grandma, 4m, 3w	Date for Bobby Sox, 2m, 3w
Shock Of His Life, 3m, 3w	Stoney Jones, 2m, 4w (extras)
Uncle Tom's Crabbin', 5m, 6w	

Books, 50 cents each

3 ACT PLAYS

Rest Assured, 6m, 7w	If Mother Only Knew, 5m, 6w
(extras, if desired)	Happy Daze, 6m, 6w
Finders Creepers, 7m, 7w	Just Ducky, 6m, 6w
Boarding House Reach, 7m, 9w	Desperate Ambrose, 6m, 6w
Honey In the Hive, 6m, 8w	Mother Does the Talking, 6m, 7w

Royalty, \$10.00 — Books, 75 cents

WEST VIRGINIA: All our hats are off to this writer (Donald Payton) who really knows how to write an enjoyable teen-age play. We have presented all of his plays for they are so successful and enjoyable. Please let me know when his next play is published. — Mrs. Johnson, Director of Dramatics, Bluefield, West Virginia.

WISCONSIN: We feel that "Rest Assured" has been one of our top productions and we've had some mighty good ones in the past too. The cast loved it and the audiences were more than enthusiastic over it. — Rev. Guy E. Guyon, Central Catholic High School, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

TEXAS: Miss Mary Frances Ball, Director of Dramatics, McLean Jr. High School, Ft. Worth, Texas, recently wrote us as follows: "Donald Payton writes, in my opinion, almost the only plays which are perfectly adapted to junior high school. Our audience loved 'Wilbur Saw it First' and so did I!"

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THE HEUER PUBLISHING CO.
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BRIEF VIEWS

WALTER H. BAKER COMPANY
Boston, Massachusetts

The House of Atreus, three dramas in one act by Burton Crane. These are capable condensations of the stories of Hecuba, Agamemnon and Elektra so arranged that they can be played either as separate incidents or as a three-act play chronologically connected. Since Euripides, Aeschylus and Sophocles are no longer with us they can hardly protest the association of their creations in this manner and the plays will be a painless introduction to the Greek tragedies. Translation is in the modern idiom and very sensitive.

She Stoops to Conquer, a comedy in five acts, by Oliver Goldsmith; 10 m., 4 f., extras; various settings; costumes 18th century. Goldsmith's famous play in the classical acting edition is not a new publication but it is worth reporting at this time because of its opportunities for period acting and staging. *She Stoops* is not a comedy of manners; it does not belong in the category of *The Rivals* or the other Sheridan plays. Goldsmith was a humorist but not a satirist; his characters are full-bodied and human and his dialogue written to bring out character instead of to release epigrams. Goldsmith is recommended therefore to student performers in search of some good rollicking fun and the chance to dress up without looking foolish.

THEATRE ARTS BOOKS New York City

The Seagull, produced by Stanislavsky, edited with an introduction by S. D. Balukhaty, translated from the Russian by David Magarshack. This is the famous prompt copy of the production of Chekov's masterpiece as given by the Moscow Art Theatre at the end of the year 1898. The play had been given two years earlier, in a rather routine presentation at the Alexandrinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg. It played only five performances in repertory and was then written off as a failure. Meanwhile Stanislavsky and his collaborator, Nemirovich-Danchenko, had formed the Moscow Art Theatre group and were casting around for a vehicle. Stanislavsky believing in Chekov, and *The Seagull* in particular, undertook to prepare a prompt copy. This undertaking is the heart of this present volume.

A prompt copy by Stanislavsky, similar to the "regie-buch" of Max Reinhardt, is a far richer piece of literature than the acting script of a present-day Broadway play. Not only the movement of the characters but their pantomime and gesture, their motivations and their tones of voice are all sharply defined beyond the possibility of any misunderstanding. The narrative which precedes the actual play script tells the full story of the production and mentions that the rehearsals were conducted, not by Stanislavsky himself (he was playing a part) but by Nemirovich-Danchenko. The latter's part in the success of the Moscow players has rather been forgotten in the acclaim to Stanislavsky so this book makes some attempt to redress the balance. Nevertheless the artistic creation is Stanislavsky's; it was he who brought play and characters to life by his interleaved prompt book.

A book like this should be required reading for any director who takes his profession seriously. It is not necessary to agree with Stanislavsky's method nor his stage directions in order to profit. Careful study and conscientious examination of the stage directions will do more than the reading of a dozen purely academic treatises on "the art of production." Here is not *how* to do it, but how it was *done* — as

By TALBOT PEARSON

it had never been *done* before. Printed in England, the book is exceptionally attractive in format with a superior type-face and many illustrations.

THE ARTCRAFT PRESS Columbia, Missouri

Teaching Speech in the High School, by Loren D. Reid. The one-time Executive Secretary of the Speech Association of America has let his hair down in this one. The title is a dead give-away; it really is a book for teachers, definitely not one for students. In fact the latter should never be allowed to see a copy; the book should be hidden whenever youth comes down the corridor.

Mr. Reid is refreshingly frank and engagingly humble about his own start as a practitioner in the field. He admits having entered into the teaching of "communication" by the back door, as so many others less talented have done, but once in he became fascinated by the possibilities and plunged into the struggle with all the enthusiasm that has been one of his most notable characteristics. His great organizing ability is evident in the writing of this volume. His material is clearly set out and all his points definitely enunciated. For this reviewer he performs one function of particular value in explaining "Interpretation." This, says Mr. Reid, with the necessary emphasis, is entirely a matter of vocal and facial expression and he deplors the general lack of attention to this important feature of speech teaching. He makes it plain (and we can scarce forbear to cheer) that interpretation is not mugging nor extravagant

gesticulation, not even acting. It is a matter of words, analyzing them for intellectual and emotional connotation, glorying in their sound and their melody.

Chapters on overcoming stage fright, on meeting classroom situations, on the reader's career as a teacher, are all equally helpful and well communicated. Here is a teacher teaching teachers, which is why we repeat the book should be secreted by the fortunate owner and none of this precious contents wasted on students until it has been properly savored. Then, fortified by Mr. Reid's wisdom and advice, the neophyte teacher may redistill it for the benefit of his own pupils, taking all the credit to himself. The author will not mind. If he were any less generous, he would not be the superb teacher that he is.

CROWN PUBLISHERS, INC.

New York City

Best American Plays, Third Series 1945-1951, edited with an introduction by John Gassner. The late Burns Mantle's task of selecting the ten best plays of each Broadway season is still carried on since his death by his literary heirs. Mr. Gassner has never pretended to be able to find ten "bests" in any one year, contenting himself with publishing complete scripts of a number of plays every five years or so. He is therefore more selective than Mr. Mantle used to be (or his heirs are) and his omissions are as notable as his selections. It is disturbingly true that many plays which obtain the rank of "smash hit" or win a Pulitzer Prize do not look so well five years later. Mr. Gassner has the advantage of a longer perspective and there can be little quarrel with his choice of "bests," still less with the implied criticism of (or disappointment with) the titles he omits from the six-year survey.

While few, if any, of these seventeen now published can be considered suitable for high school presentation, they are all worth reading as a guide to the shifts in dramatic style and to the topics which inform present day dramatists. One of the plays, the only one which failed to make money on Broadway, is not beyond the scope of a group of young male players. *Billy Budd* was something less than a commercial success on Broadway, but it made a profound impression on all who saw it. It is a moving story, well told, written with the deepest sincerity. Surely there can be found a prep school anxious to enact this story of the conflict between absolute good and absolute evil, particularly if they have read the Herman Melville novel on which it is based. Or would the girls in some high school stand aside just for once and let the boys do a play all by themselves?

HARPER AND BROTHERS

New York City

Creative Dramatics in Home, School and Community, by Ruth Gonsler Lane and Geraldine Brain Siks. The authors of this very practical volume begin by acknowledgment of their debt to Winifred Ward, the pioneer worker in this field. Building upon the sure foundation of Miss Ward's technique, they offer specific suggestions for the use of creative drama activities in three specific areas — as their subtitle proclaims. It is all very well done, with the minimum of didacticism, and a reader will be surprised to find the tremendous scope and possibilities of a program where leadership may be in the teacher's hands but where the children furnish the ideas. Too bad that children have to grow up, or as Bernard Shaw is supposed to have said: "What a pity such a wonderful thing as youth should be wasted on children." Yet any teacher who intelligently leads her pupils in creative drama may well find herself enjoying youth — at any age.

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